THE HISTORY

OF BRITISH INDIA,

BY

MILL & WILSON.

IN NINE VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

THE HISTORY OF

BRITISH INDIA.

BY JAMES MILL, ESQ.

FOURTH EDITION WITH NOTES AND CONTINUATION,

BY HORACE HAYMAN WILSON, M.A., F.R.S.

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETIES OF PARIS, BOSTON, AND CALCUTTA, AND OF THE ORIENTAL SOCIETY OF GERMANY; OF THE IMPERIAL ACADEMIES OF ST. PETERSBURGH AND VIENNA; OF THE IMPERIAL SOCIETY OF NATURALISTS OF MOSCOW, AND OF THE ROYAL ACADEMIES OF BERLIN AND MUNICH; CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE ACADEMY OF FRANCE; PH. DR. IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BRESLAU; MED. DR. IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MARBURG, ETC. ETC.; AND BODEN PROFESSOR OF SANSCRIT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

VOLUME VI.

LONDON:
JAMES MADDEN, 8, LEADENHALL STREET.

M.DCCC.XLVIII.

CONTENTS.

BOOK VI.

Page

CHAPTER VII.

Proceedings in Parliament relative to the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1793—Sir John Shore succeeds Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General—Relations of the English Government to the Nizam and the Mahrattas—Death of Mhadajee Sindia—War between the Nizam and Mahrattas—Guarantee of the Treaty of Alliance—Death of the Peshwa, and its Effects—Treaty fulfilled by Tippoo, and the Hostages restored—State of Oude—Death of the Nabob of Oude, and Succession of his Son—The young Nabob dethroned by the English on a charge of Spuriousness, and Sadut Ali made Nabob—Affairs at Madras—Death of Mohammed Ali—Lord Hobart endeavours to obtain the Transfer of part of the Nabob's Country—Dispute between Lord Hobart and the Supreme Board—Capture of the Dutch Settlements 1

CHAPTER VIII.

Lord Mornington Governor-General—Agents of Tippoo at the Isle of France—Governor-General resolves on immediate War—Import of the Circumstances—Opinions in India—Nizam Ali receives more English Troops, and dismisses the French—Unfruitful Negotiations at Poonah—Progression of Governor-General's Demands—War begins—Plan of the Campaign—March of the Army—Siege of Seringapatam—Alarming Situation of the British Army in regard to Food—Seringapatam taken, and the Sultan killed—Division and Settlement of the conquered Country.... 70

CHAPTER IX.

Situation of Oude, as left by Lord Teignmouth, highly satisfactory to the home Authorities—Great Changes me-

Page

ditated by Lord Mornington—Extirpation of British Subjects, not in the Service of the Company—Apprehended Invasion of the Afghans—Endeavour to obtain the Alliance of Sindia—The Idca abandoned—An Embassy to the King of Persia—Insurrection by Vizir Ali—Reform of his military Establishment pressed on the Nabob of Oude—His Reluctance—He proposes to abdicate in favour of his Son—The Governor-General presses him to abdicate in favour of the Company—He refuses—Indignation of the Governor-General—He resorts to Coercion on the Reform, which meant, the Annihilation, of the Nabob's military Establishment—The business of the Annihilation judiciously performed—The Vizir alleges the Want of Resources for the Maintenance of so great a British Army—From this, the Governor-General infers the Necessity of taking from him the Government of his country—If the Nabob would not give up the whole of his Country willingly, such a Portion of it as would cover the Expense of the British Army to be taken by Force—This was more than one half—The Vizir to be allowed no independent Power even in the rest—The Vizir desires to go on a Pilgrimage—The Hon. H. Wellesley sent to get from him an appearance of Consent—The Cession of the Portion necessary for the Expense of the Army effected—A Commission for settling the Country with Mr. H. Wellesley at the Head—Governor-General makes a Progress through the Country—Transactions between him and the Nabob of Oude—Proposition of the Bhao Begum—Objections of the Court of Directors to the Appointment of Mr. H. Wellesley—Overruled by the Board of Control—Government of Furruckabad assumed by the Company—Settlement of the ceded Districts—Full Approbation of the home Authorities 172

CHAPTER X.

The Nabob of Surat deposed—The Raja of Tanjore deposed—The Nabob of Arcot deposed 288

CHAPTER XI.

Two sets of Princes, connected with the English; one, whom they made resign both the military, and the civil powers of their government; another, whom they made resign only the military powers—Endeavour to make the

Page

Peshwa resign the military part of his Government—Negotiations for that purpose from 1798 to 1802—Negotiations with Dowlut Rao Sindia for a similar purpose—The dependence of all the Mahratta States expected as the effect of the resignation to the English of the military power of any one of them—Negotiation with Sindia ineffectual—War between Sindia and Holkar—The Peshwa driven from Poona—For the sake of being restored by English arms, the Peshwa consents to the resignation of his military power—A Treaty for that purpose signed at Bassein—The Governor-General expects, that the other Mahratta States will not dare to quarrel with the English on account of the Treaty of Bassein—Sindia assembles his troops, and marches to the vicinity of Boorhanpore—Persevering Attempts to make Sindia execute a Treaty similar to that of Bassein—The Peshwa restored—Probability of a War with the Mahratta Princes on account of the Treaty of Bassein—Junction of the Armies of Sindia and the Raja of Berar—Sindia and the Raja required by the English to quit their present menacing Position, and replace their Armies at their usual Stations—Sindia and the Raja evading compliance, the English regard them as Enemies—Arguments by which the Governor-General endeavoured to prove that the line of policy which led to this crisis was good—Investigation of those Arguments 368

CHAPTER XII.

Objects to which the Operations of the Army in the North were to be directed—Objects to which the Operations of the Army in the South were to be directed—Minor Objects of the War—General Lake takes the Field—History of the French Force in the Service of Sindia, and of his Possessions in the Doab—History of the Emperor Shah Aulum continued—Battle of Alighur, and Capture of the Fort—Battle of Delhi, and Surrender of the Emperor to the English—Agra taken—Battle of Laswaree—French Force in the Service of Sindia destroyed, and his dominions in the Doab transferred to the English—Operations of the Army under General Wellesley in the South—Ahmednuggur taken—Battle of Assye—Boorhanpore and Asseerghur taken—Sindia makes an Overture toward Peace—Battle of Argaum—Siege and Capture of the Fort of Gawilghur—Ope-

Page

rations in Bundelcund—in Cuttack—in Guzerat—Negotiation with the Raja of Berar—Treaty concluded—Negotiation with Sindia—Treaty concluded— Engagements with the minor Princes near the Jumna—Sindia enters into the defensive Alliance—Governor-General's Account of the Benefit derived from the defensive Alliances, and the Mahratta War—Investigation of that Account.............. 479

CHAPTER XIII.

Necessity inferred of curbing Holkar—Intercourse between Holkar and Sindia renewed—Governor-General resolves to take Holkar's Dominions, but to give them away to the Peshwa, Sindia, and the Nizam—Holkar retreats before the Commander-in-Chief, toward the South—The Commander-in-Chief withdraws the army into Cantonments, leaving Colonel Monson with a Detachment in advance—Holkar turns upon Monson—Monson makes a disastrous Retreat to Agra—The British Army from Guzerat subdues Holkar's Dominions in Malwa—Holkar by a Stratagem attacks Delhi—Brave Defence of Delhi—Holkar's Dominions in the Deccan subdued—Defeat of Holkar's Infantry at Deeg—Rout of his Cavalry at Furruckabad—The Raja of Bhurtpore, one of the allied Chieftains, joins with Holkar—Unsuccessful Attack upon the Fortress of Bhurtpore—Accommodation with the Raja of Bhurtpore—Disputes with Sindia—Prospect of a War with Sindia—Holkar joins the Camp of Sindia—The British Resident ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to quit the Camp of Sindia—Sindia endeavours to prevent the Departure of the Resident—Marquis Wellesley succeeded by Marquis Cornwallis—Cornwallis's View of the State of the Government—Of Wellesley's System of subsidiary and defensive Alliance—Cornwallis resolves to avoid a War with Sindia, by yielding every Point in Dispute—To make Peace with Holkar by restoring all the Territories he had lost—To dissolve the Connexion of the British Government with the minor Princes on the Mahratta Frontier—Negotiations between Sindia and the Commander-in-Chief—Death of Lord Cornwallis—Sir G. Barlow adheres to the Plans of Lord Cornwallis—Holkar advances into the Country of the Seiks—Pursued by Lord Lake—A fresh Treaty concluded with Sindia—Treaty with Holkar—Financial Results 561

HISTORY

OF

BRITISH INDIA.

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER VII.

Proceedings in Parliament relative to the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1793.—Sir John Shore succeeds Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General.—Relations of the English Government to the Nizam and the Mahrattas.—Death of Mhadajee Sindiah.—War between the Nizam and Mahrattas.—Guarantee of the Treaty of Alliance.—Death of the Peshwa, and its Effects.—Treaty fulfilled by Tippoo, and the Hostages Restored.—State of Oude.—Death of the Nabob of Oude, and Succession of his Son.—The young Nabob dethroned by the English on a charge of Spuriousness, and Sadut Ali made Nabob.—Affairs at Madras.—Death of Mohammed Ali.—Lord Hobart endeavours to obtain the Transfer of part of the

Nabob's Country.—Dispute between Lord Hobart and the Supreme Board.—Capture of the Dutch Settlements.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1793.

In 1793, the termination of the period assigned to the exclusive privileges of the Company so nearly approached, that the question of renewing the charter, and of confirming or changing the present system of government, could no longer be deferred. People had now so generally acquired the habit of lifting their eyes to the management of national affairs; and equal treatment to all so forcibly recommended itself as the best rule of government, that the commercial and manufacturing population were impelled to make an effort, more than usually strong, for the freedom of the Eastern trade. The principal places of manufacture and commerce in the kingdom; Liverpool, Glasgow, Paisley, Manchester, Norwich, Exeter; exhibited combinations of the merchants and manufacturers, who passed the strongest resolutions; importuned the ministers; petitioned the legislature; and desired to have an opportunity of proving how much the real policy of commerce was violated, and the wealth of the country kept down, by the monopoly of so large a field of trade as that unhappily consigned to the East India Company.

The Indian government was so organized, as now very well to answer ministerial purposes; it was therefore the study of ministers to preserve things as they were. The Board of Control and the Court of Directors cast, with some skill, the parts which they had respectively to perform. A committee of Direc-

tors was appointed, whose business it was to draw up reports upon the subject of the Eastern trade, and to answer the arguments of those by whom the freedom of that trade was advocated or claimed. Three such reports were exhibited. They were in the first instance referred to the Committee of the Privy Council relating to trade and plantations; and in the proper stage of the business were submitted to the House of Commons.

On the 25th of February, Mr. Dundas, in the House of Commons, made a display of the pecuniary state of the Company. Fortunately for the designs which were in agitation, the accounts of receipt and disbursement presented, just at that moment, a balance of a large amount, on the favourable side.[1] Of this circumstance, the greatest possible advantage was taken. Every thing which could be effected by the confident assertions, so potent in persuasion, of

[1] Mr. Tucker observes, "If I were called upon to point out the period when the Company's finances abroad were in the most prosperous state, I should probably fix on the year 1792-3, for we then possessed an annual surplus, sufficient to liquidate the territorial debt in little more than three years. The territorial charge incurred in England was inconsiderable; our possessions were more compact and manageable, and more productive with reference to their extent; and the produce and manufactures of India being in great demand in the west, our remittances could be effected on advantageous terms in commodities produced by the labour of an industrious population." Review of the Financial Situation of the East India Company, in 1824, by Henry St. George Tucker, p. 29. The surplus revenue of 1792-3 was 1,858,000*l.* exclusive of a further sum of 200,000*l.* received from Tippoo. In 1793-4 it was 1,119,000*l.*, and in 1794-5 it was 1,182,000*l.* In the following year it declined to 800,000*l.*, and in 1796-7 to 240,000*l.* In 1797-8 there was a deficit which continued to prevail for several years. Ibid. p. 13. The expectations suggested by the surplus of 1792-3 were therefore precipitately entertained, although, as has been sufficiently proved by subsequent events, the revenues of India, when carefully administered, have been always more than adequate to the expenses of the government in time of peace.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1793.

men of influence and power, was done, to captivate the general mind with a prospect of Indian prosperity; to generate a belief that a great fountain, whence a perennial stream of wealth would flow upon the British nation, was, by the wisdom of its rulers, secured to them in India. Estimates were formed, with all the airs of accuracy, or rather of moderation, by which it was made to appear, that the surplus, exhibited by the accounts of the year immediately passed, would, in future years, rather increase than diminish. And with profound solemnity an appropriation, as if for perpetuity, was proposed, of a large superabounding sum, which would, it was said, be annually received from India. The eyes of men were successfully dazzled; and when Mr. Dundas called out to them, "Will you stop the tide of so much prosperity for untried theories?" those who knew but little either about the theory or the practice of the case, that is, the greater number, were easily made to believe, that there was a great certainty of securing what they were told was the actual influx of wealth, if they persevered in the present course; a great danger of losing it, if they allowed themselves to be drawn, by delusive prospects, into another.

The friend of Mr. Dundas, and, as well from intellect, as from office, the advocate of his schemes, Mr. Bruce, the historiographer of the Company, says, "Upon no occasion, perhaps, have men's minds been less prepared for a decision, on a subject of such magnitude and importance."[1] It is, indeed,

[1] Report on the Negotiation between the Honourable East India Company and the Public, respecting the renewal of the Company's exclusive

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1793.

true, that the people were deplorably ignorant of the history and management of their East India affairs; and it was, on this account, the more easy to make them throw themselves, with blind confidence, upon the assertions of men, whose knowledge was presumed from their situation and pretensions.

An annual surplus of 1,239,241*l.* from the revenues and Commerce of India, after paying the Company's Indian charges of every description, was assumed. Of this magnificent sum, the following distribution was to be made. In the first place, as most due, it was proposed, that 500,000*l.* should be annually appropriated to liquidate the debt of the Company contracted in India. But in the next place, it was patriotically determined, that 500,000*l.* should be annually given to the nation, as a tribute from its Indian dominion. With regard to the remainder of the grand surplus, it was represented, by the Indian minister, as no more than equitable, that the meritorious proprietors of East India stock should not be forgotten. He recommended an increase of dividend from eight to ten per cent. By this, 100,000*l.* more of the annual surplus would be absorbed. A circumstance, which might have excited suspicion, but which appears to have been perfectly guiltless of any such disagreeable effect, was this; that, amid all these promises of wealth, the Company was in want of pecuniary assistance; and was to receive immediate authority for raising what was equivalent to a loan of 2,000,000*l.* It

Privilege of Trade, for Twenty Years, from March, 1794. By John Bruce, Esq. M. P., F. R. S., Historiographer to the Honourable East India Company, p. 13.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1793.

was not indeed to be called a loan. The *name* of a loan, associated with the idea of poverty, was at this time to be avoided. The Company were to be empowered to add 1,000,000*l.* to their capital stock, which, being subscribed, on the faith of a dividend of ten per cent., at 200 per cent., produced to the Company's treasury a sum of 2,000,000*l.* By this, it was said, the Company's bond debt in England would be reduced 1,500,000*l.* The dividend upon this new capital would exhaust 100,000*l.* more of the surplus revenue. Of the appropriation of the remainder, which, to show accuracy, and because even small sums are of great importance, was carried to the last degree of minuteness, it would here, however, be out of place to render any account.

After some affectation of discord between the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, Mr. Dundas having pretended in parliament to believe it possible that the Company might decline to petition for the renewal of their charter on the terms which the minister desired to impose, the petition of the Company was presented to the House of Commons, and taken into consideration on the 23rd of April.

It was, to some of the opposing members, a source of complaint, when a measure, on which interests of so much importance depended, and about which so profound an ignorance prevailed, was to be considered and determined, that a committee, to collect and to communicate information, had not, as on former occasions, preceded the decision, for which a call upon the legislature was

now about to be made. Such a committee, by which ministerial purposes were more likely at the present moment to be thwarted than served, the ministers represented as altogether unnecessary; because, there was no material circumstance, they asserted, relating to India, about which there was not sufficient information, in the valuable and numerous documents, which they had communicated to the House.

The speech of Mr. Dundas displayed and recommended the projected plan. In all the great and leading particulars, the scheme which had been introduced by Mr. Pitt's bill of 1784, and better adapted to ministerial or national purposes by the amendments or declarations of succeeding acts, remained without alteration.

The powers of the Board of Control, and of the Court of Directors, were established on the same footing, on which they had been placed by the declaratory act of 1788. The powers of the Governor-General and his Council, of whom was composed the supreme organ of government in India, with the powers of the Governors and Councils at the subordinate presidencies, remained as they had been established by the act of 1784, and the amending act of 1786. The monopoly of the Eastern trade was still secured to the Company. The appropriations recommended by Mr. Dundas, of a supposed surplus of revenue, were dressed in the formalities of law. The increase of dividend, and the increase of capital, were authorized. And the lease of the exclusive privileges was renewed for a term of twenty years.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1793.

Only two alterations were introduced, of sufficient importance to require statement and explanation.

When the bill of Mr. Pitt entered the lists against that of Mr. Fox, the ground of patronage was the field of contention. On this it was, that, as the demerit of the one was to suffer defeat, the merit of the other was to be crowned with victory. On the part, therefore, of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, and their party, was required, either the reality, or, in place of the reality, the affectation, of a sort of horror at the enormity of increasing ministerial influence. To evade objections from this source; objections which they themselves had raised to such a height of importance, it was arranged, on the introduction of the plan, that no salary should be annexed to the duties of the Board of Control. These duties were to be executed by Members of His Majesty's Privy Council, who had good emoluments, on some other score, and so little to do for them, as to be very well paid for discharging the duties of the Board of Control into the bargain. This make-shift, unless it be contemplated in the light of a trick, to amuse the spectators till their attention relaxed, when paid functionaries of the usual sort might be quietly introduced, is a species of burlesque on legislation. To attach to one office a salary whose magnitude is out of all proportion to the duties; next to create another office, with ample duties but no salary: and then to jumble both sets of duties, however heterogeneous, into one set of hands, exhibits a singular contrast with the rule of securing every service by its own appropriate reward; and paying no more for any

service, than the performance of the service strictly demands. The time was now come, when the same aversion to patronage was not necessary to be displayed. It was therefore enacted, that a salary, to be paid by the Company, should be annexed to the office of certain of the Commissioners of the India Board; and that, in the appointment of those Commissioners, the circle of the Privy Council should no longer be the boundary of His Majesty's choice.

The second alteration regarded the Indian trade. As an expedient, for softening the opposition of the commercial bodies, it was devised, that the Company should afford annually not less than 3,000 tons of shipping, in which private individuals might on their own account traffic with India, subject to the restriction of not exporting military stores, or importing piece goods, and subject also to the restriction of lodging imports in the Company's warehouses, and disposing of them at the Company's sales.

In adducing motives for the approbation of these measures, Mr. Dundas was successful and unsuccessful: unsuccessful in offering any reasons which can now satisfy an enlightened inquirer, but completely successful in offering reasons which satisfied the bulk of his auditory. He began with what he knew to be a favourite topic for a British Parliament—the wisdom of contempt for theory. On this occasion, however, theory was treated by him with unusual lenity; for though Mr. Dundas affirmed that the theories to which he was opposed did not hold true in the case for which he had to provide; he was not very unwilling to allow that they held good in all

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1793.

other cases. The propositions, which Mr. Dundas here vilified by the name of theories, were two; the first, That the business of government, and the business of commerce, cannot, with advantage to the governed, be lodged in the same hands; the second, That freedom is the life of commerce, and restraint and monopoly its bane. What argument did Mr. Dundas produce to show that these propositions did not hold true in the case of India? India, said he, has hitherto been governed in contempt of them: *ergo*, they do not hold true in the case of India. Mr. Dundas, it is true, asserted also, that India had been governed *well*; but "governed well," in this case, means simply *governed*, and nothing more; "governed," somehow or other. As to the *quality* of the government, besides that it was the gratuitous and interested assumption, therefore worth nothing, of Mr. Dundas, what is the standard of comparison? India had been governed well, as compared with what? As compared with the highest state of advantage in which human nature is capable of being placed? This is what Mr. Dundas himself would not have ventured, even in his boldest moments of affirmation, to state. As compared with the ancient Mogul government? Was that the meaning of Mr. Dundas? A mighty boast! That the pride of British legislation should produce something not quite so bad as the despotism of barbarians. And this, even at that time, was a matter of doubt. It is, now, something more. If this, however, was the meaning; the logic of the ministers and of parliament, the one inventing, the other assenting, stood as follows: "India, in the hands of a civilized

people, has been governed, not quite so badly, say the ministers; quite as badly, say other persons; as when it was under the despotism of barbarians: *Therefore*, it is true, that the union of commerce with government, and the monopoly of trade, are good things in India." This is a logic by which a man may be helped to a great variety of convenient conclusions. With Mr. Dundas, the Grand Vizir of Constantinople might say, The empire of the Sublime Porte is "governed well;" *ergo*, janisaries, and the bow-string, are excellent in the empire of the Sublime Porte. The above reasoning Mr. Dundas corroborated by an established parliamentary axiom, which he often found of unspeakable utility, That *all change in matters of government is bad.* Allow this, and it followed, with undeniable certainty, that all change in the government of India was bad. On the other hand, if the absolute and universal truth of that celebrated axiom should be susceptible of dispute, all the oratory which Mr. Dundas expended on the topic of change in general, falls, unsupported, to the ground.

The particular change which his opponents contemplated, the removal of the government of India from the hands of a commercial corporation, would, he said, produce the following effects; it would retard the payment of the Company's debts; it would check the growing commerce between the two countries; and it would endanger the allegiance of India. He asked, if it would be wise to incur so much danger for a theory? With regard to the first two of these bare, unsupported assumptions, which ought to have passed for nothing, experience

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1793.

has provided the answer. The government has remained as Mr. Dundas desired, and the Company, so far from paying its debts, has enormously increased them; it has remained as Mr. Dundas desired, and the commerce, instead of increasing, has dwindled to a trifle. That in a well-ordered attempt to improvc the mode of governing the people of India, there was any thing to weaken their allegiance, is so evidently untrue, that it is wonderful there should be a legislative assembly, in a civilized country, in which it could be asserted without derision and disgrace.

"All this danger," said the Indian minister, "to be incurred for a theory?" First, Mr. Dundas's eagerness to escape from theory has not avoided the danger, but realized a great part of it. Secondly, when he treats the word *theory*; when all that class of politicians, to which he belonged, treat the word theory, with so much contempt, what is it they mean? *Thought:* all application of the thinking powers to the business of government, they call theory; every thing, in short, except mechanical trudging in a beaten track. In the present case, thought, applying the results of experience to the circumstances of India, endcavoured to foresee what mode of government would be attended with the happiest effects: but if ever thought, in consequence of this operation, recommends any thing different in government from that which actually exists, it is, by Mr. Dundas and his fellows, to receive the name of theory, and to be exploded. "All the good which now exists, will you sacrifice it to a theory?" When thought has accurately weighed the value of that

which exists, and accurately weighed the value of that which may be got by a change; and, after all that is good and evil on both sides is maturely considered, pronounces deliberately that the second value is greater than the first; what is meant by asking, whether it is wise to sacrifice so much good to a theory? Is it not asking us whether it is wise to sacrifice the less good to the greater? In such cases the answer is, that it is wise, to sacrifice so much good to theory. It is only an abuse of language to express the facts in such inappropriate terms.

Mr. Dundas said, that no two persons agreed, in the substitutes which were proposed for the present plan. This, too, however ridiculous, is a standing argument against improvement. Yet it is not the question, whether few or many schemes are proposed; but whether any of them is good. It would be a strange maxim of government, that, where a great end is in view, and men have different opinions about the means, in that case all power of choice should be extinguished, and things must remain as they are. How numerous soever the opinions, it is still the business of wisdom to inquire what is best; and take the most effectual measures for carrying it into happy execution. It is worthy of particular regard, that almost all the general arguments of those who oppose the improvement of political institutions, may thus be traced up to one assumption; viz. That the original condition of human beings, the brutal savage state, ought never to have been altered; and that all those men who have laboured to

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1793.

make human nature what it is, ought to be condemned as wicked.

Among his other arguments, or, more properly speaking his assertions, Mr. Dundas affirmed, that the surplus revenue of India could not be carried to England, which he affectedly called *realizing,* but by the Company's trade. There is nothing, it appears from experience, too absurd to pass for an argument in an aristocratical assembly. That neither money nor goods could be conveyed from India to England, except by the East India Company, was a proposition which it required no ordinary share of credulity to digest. Experience, moreover, has proved, what a knowledge of the theory of man would have foretold, that there would be no surplus revenue to bring.

Mr. Dundas made use of other assertions. He asserted, that free trade would produce colonization; and that colonization would produce the loss of India. Unhappily, it is almost impossible to establish any considerable number of Europeans in India; because the natives subsist upon so little, that the wages of labour are too low to enable Europeans to live. If it were possible, nothing would be of so much advantage, both to the people of India, and to the people of England.

As a weight to counterbalance the arguments of those who pleaded for the separation of the commerce from the government of India, and for the dissolution of the Company, Mr. Dundas delivered it as his old, and, after much time and experience, his present and confirmed opinion, that, if the patronage of India

were added to the other sources of the influence of the crown, it would be sufficient to ensure to the crown a majority in both houses of parliament, and would destroy the substance of the constitution, through the medium of its forms. The patronage of India was tranferred to the crown. It was the express purpose of the declaratory act of 1788, to place the government of India fully and completely in the hands of the ministers. Is the patronage of the Admiralty Board, the patronage of the Commander-in-Chief, or that of the Lord Chancellor, less ministerial patronage, because it is by these functionaries it is dispensed; Was it possible to give to ministers the unlimited power over the government of India, and not to give the benefit of the patronage along with it?

The two great crimes of which the government in India had been accused were; pillage of the natives, and wars of conquest. The present bill, Mr. Dundas asserted, would cure these evils. How? It had two expedients for that purpose: the land-tax was now fixed; and the Governor-General was responsible to parliament.

For annexing salaries to the Board of Control, and enabling his Majesty to make any body a Commissioner, little trouble in search of a reason seems to have been thought necessary. Without a salary, and without a choice of other persons than members of the Privy-Council, no body, said Mr. Dundas, could be got who would keep the office so long, or attend to its business so much, as to be capable of taking a useful part in its management. Nine years before, was this incapable of being foreseen? But foresight

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1793.

is theory. When the Commissioners of Control were first appointed, there were persons who had so much salary, and so little to do for it, that they would be very well paid for both services; viz., those of the India Board, and those attached to the salary, added together. After an additional salary was got for the India Commissioners, what was done with the surplus salary of those who had too much for the services which it was intended to pay? Was any of it taken away? No. Why? To this last question, no answer is required.

By allowing 3000 tons, for private trade, in the Company's ships, Mr. Dundas took credit for having done something considerable in favour of the manufacturers and merchants. The source of advantage in private trade would be found in the more expeditious and economical methods to which private interest would give birth. By subjecting the private trader to the delays and expenses of the Company, Mr. Dundas cut off the possibility of advantage; and the merchants declined to occupy the unprofitable channel which he had opened.

In every one of the particular objects which this bill pretended to have in view; the enlargement of British commerce, the extinction of debt, and the prevention of conquest; its failure, on experience, has proved to be complete.

It encountered very little opposition till its third reading in the lower house. On that occasion it was furiously assaulted by Mr. Fox. The House of Commons, he observed, had, in the year 1780, proclaimed their solemn opinion, that, "the in-

fluence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished." In defiance of this alarming declaration, in violation of the solemn protestations with which the nation were amused, upon the first introduction of the present system of Indian government, a new lot of influence was avowedly created. This was little. The mighty mass of evil existed in the influence which was warehoused for ministerial use with the Court of Directors. This was the most dangerous patronage at the disposal of the Crown. Why? because it was irresponsible. "Is it," said Mr. Fox, "to be placed in the hands of those who really have the power over it? No! it is to be given to their agents and dependants; whose responsibility, from the nature of their situation, it is absurd to speak of.—It has been asserted," he cried, "that the patronage of India consists in the appointment of a few writers. If there is a man in this House! if there is a man in this country! if there is one man in the British territory in India! who can believe this assertion, I wish him joy of his credulity! I ask any man, who is not insane,—in whom, if this bill shall pass into a law, will the whole of the patronage of India be invested? Will not the Company and their Directors be the mere tools of the minister? Who appointed Lord Cornwallis? Who Sir John Shore? The clear effect of the measure is to give to the minister all the power, and screen him from all responsibility."[1]

Mr. Pitt answered: by complaining that his op-

[1] Parliamentary Debates, 24th May, 1793.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1793.

ponent had deferred to the last stage the statement of his objections; and by endeavouring to show, that the appointment of writers to India, who begin as clerks, and rise by seniority to places of importance, could not greatly increase the influence of ministers, even if their power over Directors were as complete as the argument of the opposition supposed. This, however, was not to deny, that ministers possessed all the influence created by the patronage of India; a fact which, at this time, Mr. Pitt did not affect to dispute: it was only to assert, that this influence, when it was got, was of inconsiderable importance. This was to contradict his own arguments against the bill of Mr. Fox; and to recant every assertion by which he had successfully covered it with odium. It was also to contradict the principal argument by which Mr. Dundas had defended the propriety of continuing the government of India in the hands of a commercial company. But it did not subvert the truth, that a mass of wealth equivalent to all the lucrative offices in India, ready to be employed by the Crown, in purchasing the co-operation of those who were appointed to check it, would contribute largely to convert the checking into a confederate body; and to establish a fatal union of King and parliament upon the ruin of the people.

The views of the parties who demanded, on this occasion, a change in the management of Indian affairs, are too nearly the same with the views, which have already been discussed, of preceding parties, to require any particular examination. The merchants petitioned chiefly for freedom of trade. On what grounds of reason, has been, as far as com-

patible with the nature of the present undertaking, already disclosed. The political change which most of the complaining parties appeared to contemplate, was the transfer of the details of government from the Court of Directors to his Majesty's ministers. On what ground, it appears to me, that the transfer of power which has already been made from the Court of Directors to his Majesty's ministers is not an improvement, and, by parity of reason, that any further transfer would not be an improvement, has been seen in my explanation of the nature of the instrument for the good government of India, which was provided by Mr. Pitt, in the Board of Control.

To communicate the whole of the impression, made upon a mind, which has taken a survey of the government of India, by the East India Company, more completely through the whole field of its action, than was ever taken before, and which has not spared to bring forward into the same light the unfavourable and the favourable points, it may be necessary to state, and this I conceive to be the most convenient occasion for stating, That, in regard to *intention*, I know no government, either in past or present times, that can be placed equally high with that of the East India Company; That I can hardly point out an occasion on which the schemes they have adopted, and even the particular measures they pursued, were not by themselves considered as conducive to the welfare of the people whom they governed; That I know no government which has on all occasions shown so much of a disposition to make sacrifices of its own interests to the interests of

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1793. the people whom it governed, and which has, in fact, made so many and such important sacrifices: That, if the East India Company have been so little successful in ameliorating the practical operation of their government, it has been owing chiefly to the disadvantage of their situation, distant a voyage of several months from the scene of action, and to that imperfect knowledge which was common to them with almost all their countrymen: But that they have never erred so much, as when, distrusting their own knowledge, they have followed the directions of men whom they unhappily thought wiser than themselves, viz. practical Statesmen, and Lawyers; And that, lastly, in the highly important point of the servants, or subordinate agents of government, there is nothing in the world to be compared with the East India Company, whose servants, as a body, have not only exhibited a portion of talent which forms a contrast with that of the ill-chosen instruments of other governments: but have, except in some remarkable instances, as that of the loan transactions with the Nabob of Arcot, maintained a virtue, which, under the temptations of their situation, is worthy of the highest applause.

For the immediate successor of Lord Cornwallis, choice was made of Mr. Shore, a civil servant of the Company, whose knowledge of the revenue system of India was held in peculiar esteem. Pacific habits, and skill in revenue, were possibly regarded as means abundantly necessary for realizing those pecuniary promises, which had been so loudly and confidently made to both the parliament and people of England.

About the same time that Mr. Shore, dignified for

his new station with the title of Sir John Shore, succeeded to the substantial power of the government of Bengal, its nominal sovereign, the Nabob Mubarek ud Dowla, died, after a life of thirty-seven years, and a reign of twenty-three. He left twelve sons and thirteen daughters, and was succeeded by his eldest son Uzeez ud Dowla, who was solemnly proclaimed at Calcutta on the 28th of September.

The first important circumstance which solicited the attention of the new Governor-General, was the appearance of an approaching rupture between two of the late confederates; the Nizam, and the Mahrattas. The views, upon one another, of these two states, had undergone no permanent alteration from the union to which the desire of sharing in the spoils of Tippoo had given a temporary existence. Intervening circumstances had nearly matured into act their inimical designs.

The treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, between the English, the Nizam, and Mahrattas, included a mutual guarantee against the common object of their hatred and apprehensions, the sovereign of Mysore. This guarantee Lord Cornwallis appears to have thought of great importance for English security. It follows, that he must have expected greater benefit from the co-operation of the Nizam and Mahrattas, in case of an attack, than mischief from entanglement in the wars to which the turbulent politics of these native states would certainly give occasion. The mode in which the contracting parties were to act, in accomplishing the objects of the guarantee, was left, in the treaty concluded previously to the war, to be settled by

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1793.

subsequent regulation. So much had the Governor-General this affair of the guarantee at heart, that he endeavoured, as soon after the war as possible, to secure it by an express treaty devoted to that particular object. It was, however, to be an extraordinary treaty; for Lord Corwallis, not being altogether without foresight of the evils likely to abound from an obligation to take a part in the wars which the Nizam and Mahrattas might kindle, was for inserting an article, by which the allies were not to assist one another, except, just when they pleased; or, as he chose to express it, "until they were convinced that the party requiring assistance had justice on his side, and all measures of conciliation had proved fruitless."[1]

A draught of a treaty, to this effect, was transmitted to the courts of Hyderabad and Poonah. The Nizam, though fully sensible that the English alone stood between him and destruction, was yet encouraged to the hope of drawing his profit out of the eagerness for this treaty which the Governor-General displayed. A dispute had already sprung up between him and Tippoo Sultan. The Nabob of Kernoul was the dependant of the Nizam. On that chief Tippoo was urging claims which the Nizam contested. When solicited on the subject of the treaty, the Nizam demanded, as the price of his consent, the support of the English in the affair with Tippoo. This be-

[1] Letter from Governor-General to the Resident at Poonah, dated 7th August, 1792. Colonel Wilks says, on this occasion, "The policy of his Mahratta allies was in direct and systematic opposition to every thing explicit and definite in its connexion with other powers." In this way, it might be supposed, that this was a clause exactly to suit them.

haviour, the English, who knew their advantages, treated as a crime; and expressed so much of anger, that the Nizam was eager to redeem his offence by unlimited complaisance. BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1793.

As the power of the Mahrattas was different, so was their temper. The Poonah Councils were still governed by Nana Furnavese, who now despairing of assistance from the English to support him against the designs of Sindia, opposed to the importunities of the Governor-General, on the subject of his treaty, evasion and delay. At last the Mahratta minister produced a sketch of a treaty of guarantee to which he expressed his willingness to accede, but involving terms, the acceptance of which, it is probable, he did not expect. Among these was an engagement for realizing the claims of chout upon the dominions of Tippoo.

The Mahrattas were jealous of the enlarged, and growing power of the English. They were impatient to reap the spoils of the feeble Nizam; an acquisition, to which they regarded the connexion of that prince with the English as the only obstruction. Sindia, whose power had been so greatly increased, now exerted a decisive influence on the Mahratta councils, and entertained designs of future grandeur with which the ascendency, or rather the existence, of the English in India was altogether incompatible. He was not solicitous to disguise his hatred of the connexion between them and the Nizam; or the satisfaction with which he regarded the power of Tippoo, as a counterpoise to the still more formidable power of the English.

After a negotiation of more than a year, the acces-

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1794.

sion of the Mahrattas to the union so fondly projected by Lord Cornwallis, was regarded as hopeless. The Nizam, who saw in their aversion to the proposed engagements, a design of holding themselves at liberty to fall upon him, was kindled to an ardent pursuit of the guarantee; and urged upon the English government the propriety of concluding the treaty singly with him; as it could be no reason, because a third party swerved from its engagements, that the other two should abandon theirs.[1] It entered, however, into the policy of Sir John Shore, to avoid whatever could excite the jealousy of the Mahrattas: the English government, accordingly, declared its satisfaction with the verbal acquiescence of the Nizam; and on the part of the Mahrattas, with a promise, incidentally given, that they would act agreeably to existing treaties.

The Nizam became at last so much impressed with the prospect of the dangers around him, that on the 1st of January, 1794, Sir John Kennaway, the English Resident at Hyderabad, described him to the Governor-General, as prepared to form, with the English, engagements, which would render them masters of his country for ever; and urged the wisdom of not allowing so favourable an opportunity to escape.[2]

[1] Sir John Malcolm thinks this good reasoning, p. 142.

[2] See his despatch to the Governor-General, dated Hyderabad, 1st Jan. 1794. The words of Sir John Malcolm, reporting and applauding this advice, are worthy of insertion. "In this [the despatch in question] the Resident states his conviction, that the circumstances in which the court of Hyderabad was then placed, and the character of those by whom it was ruled, were such, as gave us an opportunity, which it was wise and politic to use, to establish an influence and power in its councils, which would enable us to command its future exertions, and benefit from its resources

1794.

The course into which the Mahrattas had been guided by impulse of the circumstances in which they were placed, very highly favoured the extension of their dominion, by gradual encroachments upon the slothful and improvident governments of India. Enabled from the nature of their country, and their state of society, to exercise with advantage a continual war of depredation against the surrounding states, they were often bribed to forbearance, by those who could find no other security against their ravages. The terms of this agreement came at last to be fixed, at a fourth part of the revenues of the country which they consented to spare. This was an opening, at which the stronger party generally found the means of introducing whatever was required for the final subjugation of the country. The fourth part of the revenues was always a disputed sum; and as the Mahrattas endeavoured to make it appear to be greater than it really was, the government of the country endeavoured to make it less. Nothing is ever paid by an Indian government, so long as it can help it; least of all, an odious tribute. The Mahratta chout therefore was seldom paid, except by the terror of a Mahratta army; and by consequence it was almost always in arrear. Under the pretension of security against imposition and delay in the receipt of the chout, the

under any events that could occur." Sketch, &c. p. 144. The opinion of two such distinguished functionaries of the Company, so thoroughly conversant in the politics of India, respecting the real import of those engagements, by which the native Princes accepted the Company's troops as the instrument of their defence, is more instructive as throwing light upon the hypocrisy of preceding, than the plain dealing of subsequent times.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1794.

Mahrattas as often as possible insisted upon sending their own officers into the country to collect it. This gave them a power of interference in every measure of the government, and the support of a body of partisans, who, exercising the powers of Indian tax-gatherers, were masters of the property, and to a great degree of the person of every man subject to their exactions.

The dominions of the Nizam had long sustained the Mahratta chout; and previous to the connexion which was formed between the Hyderabad government and Lord Cornwallis, the Mahrattas exercised so great an authority in his country, that the minister of the Nizam was more attentive to the wishes of the Mahrattas than the commands of his Master. During the necessity of exertion against Tippoo, and the union formed for his subjugation, the Mahrattas had yielded to a temporary relaxation of their influence over the country of the Nizam. But they now intended to resume it with improvements; and a long arrear of chout afforded the pretext for interference.

The English government offered its mediation. The ready acceptance of the Nizam was not a matter of doubt. The Mahrattas employed evasion; and as soon as they were convinced that the interposition of the Governor-General would certainly not be with arms, they treated his mediating propositions with frigid indifference.

A circumstance, calculated to alarm the English government, occurred. Tippoo Sultan had an army in the field, and either intended, or under terror was suspected of intending, a confederacy with the Mah-

rattas for the subjugation of the Nizam. The question was, what course it now behoved the English government to pursue.

By the treaty of alliance, the Nizam, it might be urged, was entitled to the assistance of the English against Tippoo; and so little were they released from their engagement, by the infidelity of the Mahrattas, that they were rather bound to compel them to fulfil the conditions of a treaty, of which the parties were implied guarantees. Besides, the Nizam had declared, that his accession to the alliance against Tippoo was founded, not upon any confidence which he could place in Mahratta, but on that alone which he reposed in English, faith: Receiving him into the alliance upon this declaration was a virtual pledge, that the protection to which he looked from the English was not to depend upon that security which he expressly rejected: To make it depend upon that security, was, therefore, a breach of engagement. At the time when the Nizam, confiding in the security of English protection, took part with the English, the value attached to his alliance was such, that it would have been purchased with eagerness at the expense of an engagement offensive and defensive with himself. Would the Nizam, being attacked by Tippoo, have been entitled to assistance from the English, if defended by the Mahrattas? And was his title less, when about to be attacked by Tippoo, with the Mahrattas conjoined? Such a disappointment in hopes, on which he had staked the very existence of his throne, could not do less than ensure to the English the enmity of the Nizam. Nor could the English abandon him, without the appearance at once

1794.

of weakness and infidelity; without descending from that high station in which they now over-awed the Princes of India, as well by the terror of their arms, as the purity of their faith.

Considerations presented themselves of an opposite tendency. If the co-operation of all the parties in a treaty were necessary to the attainment of its end, and the defection of any one of them rendered the attainment of the end no longer possible, the defection of one dissolved, of course, the obligation of all. Again, the treaty of alliance between the English, the Nizam, and the Mahrattas, bound the parties not to assist the enemies of one another. In the case therefore, of a war between any two of the parties, the third could not interfere. In such a case, the neutrality of the third party was that which the terms of the treaty expressly required. If the friendship of the Nizam would be lost; if the opinion which prevailed of English power, and of the tenacity of English engagements, should endure a slight and temporary diminution, war was beyond comparison a greater evil. It was impossible for any body to suppose that a war against Tippoo and the Mahrattas would be easily sustained. And as the revenue of the Company was confessedly unequal to the expenditure of war, a protracted contest was to be regarded as pregnant with ruin. Even the destruction of the Nizam could not be considered as adding to the dangers of the English; since, after subverting that power, the Mahrattas and Tippoo were much more likely to make war upon one another than to combine their arms for an attack upon the British state. Finally, by the act of parliament the Company's

servants were clearly prohibited from interfering in the quarrels of the native princes, and from taking up arms against them, unless to oppose an actual invasion of the British provinces.

By these considerations, the mind of the Governor-General was determined; and he purposed to leave the Nizam to his fate. That such a determination was contrary to the expectations upon which the Nizam was induced to enter into the alliance, expectations which for that purpose he was encouraged to entertain, there seems no reason to doubt. The difficulties of the Governor-General, and the disappointment of the Nizam, were created by the looseness of the treaty. Two obvious cases, the authors of that treaty had not been able to foresee; First, if one of the three contracting parties were attacked by Tippoo, and one of the two who in that case were bound to assist should decline; Secondly, if one of the three were attacked, and one of the two, who ought to assist, instead of assisting, should join the aggressor. There was nothing in the treaty which determined what was to be done by the third party in either of those cases.

If Tippoo had attacked the English, and the Mahrattas had either not assisted, or joined in the attack, it may be strongly suspected that the English, in that case, would not have held the Nizam released from his engagement.

The opinion has also been urged, and it is not without probability, that, by declaring themselves bound to protect the Nizam, the English would not have involved themselves in the calamities of war, but

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1794.

would have prevented hostilities by the terror of their interference.[1]

When once the English have thoroughly imbibed the dread of an enemy, Tippoo, or any other; that dread, after the cause of it is weakened, or, peradventure, wholly removed, continues for a long time to warp their policy. In the opinion of the Governor-General, great danger still impended over the Company by the existence of Tippoo: The Nizam he regarded as too weak; the Mahrattas alone as sufficiently powerful to yield a counterpoise to that detested sovereign: His policy, therefore, was to retain, at some cost, the friendship of the Mahrattas; and for this purpose not to grudge the sacrifice of the Nizam.

He was relieved from a portion of his difficulties by the assurance that, if Tippoo had entertained the project of an attack upon the Nizam, it was now laid aside. In the dispute between the Nizam and Mahrattas, the treaty, he thought, created, certainly, no obligation to interfere.

In the opinion of Sir John Malcolm, an obligation existed, which cannot fail to be considered as a little extraordinary. He *seems* to say, for it is seldom that a rhetorical writer is entirely free from ambiguity, that the native powers, by joining the English in any war in which they were engaged, established a right, which nothing but their own misconduct could ever forfeit, to their friendship, and to protection against any power to whom by that conduct they might have given offence.[2] He adduces Lord

[1] This opinion is given with confidence by Sir John Malcolm.
[2] Sketch, &c. p. 167.

Cornwallis as a party to this speculation; who, "in his letter, under date the 28th of February, 1790, to the Resident at Poonah, declared, that the Mahratta state, by acting against Tippoo in concert with the British government, became entitled, in reason and equity, to a defensive alliance against that prince, even though no previous engagement existed." If this proposition means any thing real, and if assistance in war creates an obligation to assistance in return, except an obligation of which the party obliged is alone to judge; in other words, an obligation binding him only when agreeable, that is, no obligation at all: the receipt of assistance in war is a snare, which carries ruin in its consequences, and ought for ever to be shunned.[1] One little conse-

[1] This is a conclusion not necessarily resulting from the premises. Undoubtedly assistance in war against a common enemy constitutes in equity and reason a claim to assistance on a like occasion. It is possible that there may be counteracting claims by which the obligation may be overruled, but the impossibility of fulfilling an obligation is no argument against its reasonablencss or justice. In the view here taken of this transaction, the most material points are omitted. The grounds which the Nizam had to look to the British Government for protection, and the policy of affording it to him. The letter of the treaty was not violated by withholding aid from the Nizam against the Mahrattas singly or conjointly with Tippoo, but unquestionably the spirit was departed from. It was formed to maintain the integrity of the Hyderabad state against the aggression of a more powerful neighbour, and it mattered not whence the danger came; the Nizam equally required protection and had been led to expect it. The Mahrattas neither needed nor asked for protection. After the war was over the same expectation was kept alive by the negotiations set on foot by Lord Cornwallis for a continuation of a guarantee treaty with the Nizam and the Mahrattas. The Nizam had also some reason to expect favour from the English, as a return for his ready cession of Guntoor and adjustment of the arrears of Peshcush. It was also politic to provide for his protection. There was nothing to fear from him, whilst his position and resources were calculated to be of eminent advantage to the English in any future collision with Tippoo and the Mahrattas, of whose hostile

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

quence, in the present instance, it would appear that Sir John Malcolm overlooked. The Nizam and Mahrattas were about to go to war. The English had received assistance from both of them: the English were therefore bound to lend assistance to both of them:—that is, to send one body of English troops to fight against another.

Before hostilities commenced between the Subahdar and the Mahrattas, Mahdajee Sindia died. The power of this chief, and his ascendency in the Mahratta confederacy, had lately been so great, that his death was expected to produce considerable changes; and the Resident at Poonah thought it probable, that the opportunity might be so improved, as to effect an adjustment between the Nizam and Mahrattas. The Governor-General, however, would not risk offence to the Poonah government, by any sort of interference more forcible than words; and the successor of Mahdajee Sindia, his nephew Doulut Rao, soon assembled his army from the remotest parts of his dominions, and obtained an ascendency

feelings and more formidable power there could be no uncertainty. On the other hand, there seem to have been difficulties in the way of affording him protection, which are not noticed in the text, and which were not alluded to by the Governor-General. Captain Duff observes, that whatever might have been the apparent advantage of the Governor-General's interference, if it had enabled Nizam Ally to effect his evasive purpose, it must have been recorded as an injustice to the Mahrattas." Mahr. Hist. iii. 109. The demands of the Mahrattas for the Chout, during a series of years, were not altogether unfounded. It appears also, that they were not only met with evasion but with insult and defiance; and that the court of Hyderabad provoked the contest. In such a state of things the interference of the British authority must have been confined to mediation, and would probably have been of little effect. It does not seem however to have been very strenuously attempted, and the selfish motives which alone were urged for the desertion of the Nizam, were not creditable to the character of the government for generosity or justice.—W.

1795.

at once in the Poonah councils, and in the confederacy which was forming against the dominions of the Nizam.

The Nizam was the party in danger, but the first in the field. He advanced to Beder, if not with a view to actual aggression, at least with a view to interfere in the internal affairs of the Mahratta government, a considerable time before the movement of the Mahratta armies. Early in March, 1795, the advanced corps of the Mahratta army, under the command of Doulut Rao Sindia, approached; and the Nizam advanced from Beder to meet him. A general action took place. Both armies were thrown into some confusion, and neither obtained any considerable advantage. But the women of the Nizam were frightened; and under their influence he retreated from the scene of action during the night. He sought protection in the small fort of Kurdla, where the Mahrattas had the advantage of terminating the war without another blow. The fort is completely surrounded by hills, except at one particular spot. The Mahrattas took possession of this outlet, by which they completely shut up the Nizam, and cut him off from supplies. After remaining some weeks in this miserable situation, he found himself at the mercy of his enemy, and concluded a peace on such terms as they were pleased to dictate. The particulars of the treaty were not fully made known; but, beside establishing all their former claims, the Mahrattas compelled him to cede to them a country of thirty-five lacs' revenue, including the celebrated fort of Doulutabad; to pay three crores of rupees, one-third immediately,

BOOK VI
CHAP. 7.

1795.

the rest by instalments of twenty-five lacs per annum; and to give up, as a hostage for the performance of these conditions, his minister Azeem ul Omrah, whose abilities had for some time been the great support of his throne; who was the zealous friend of the English connexion; and a firm opponent of the Mahrattas.[1]

No part of the conduct of the English had more offended the Nizam, than the refusal to permit his two battalions of British troops to accompany him to the war. As the Mahrattas were the great source from which he apprehended danger, an expensive force, which could not be employed against the Mahrattas, was a loss, rather than advantage. He, therefore, shortly after his return to Hyderabad, intimated his desire to dispense with the service of the English battalions; and they marched to the territories of the Company.

The Subahdar of the Deccan had never, from the time of Bussy, been without French officers in his service. In the confederate war against Tippoo, he had two battalions of regular infantry, officered by Frenchmen, and commanded by a gentleman of the name of Raymond; who began his military career in India, at an early age, in the disastrous campaigns of Lally. At first his establishment amounted to no more than three hundred men; and he hired their arms from a merchant of his own country, at the

[1] The dispersion of the Nizam's army was the result of a panic which occurred in the course of the night, and it was then that Nizam Ali took refuge within the fort of Kurdla. In this he was shut up, not some weeks, but two days, when he was compelled to submit to the conditions specified in the text. Mahr. Hist. 3, 113.—W.

rate of eight annas[1] a month. By his services and address, he rapidly increased the favour and liberalities of the Subahdar; of which he availed himself for the augmentation and equipment of his corps. It had received great accessions both to its numbers and appointments, since the peace of Seringapatam; and the English Resident reported, probably with great exaggeration, that twenty-three battalions of this description, with twelve field-pieces, accompanied the Nizam in his campaign against the Mahrattas.

After the return of that Prince to his capital, he ordered new levies of this corps; and assigned a portion of territory for its regular payment. The expostulations of the British Resident, and his intimations that so much encouragement of the French portended serious changes in his relations with the English, were but little regarded.

A part of this corps was sent to occupy the districts of Kurpah, and Cummum. These districts lay upon the frontier of the Company's possessions; and the Governor-General took the alarm. "The measure itself," he remarked,[2] "had a suspicious not to say criminal appearance;" and he directed "the strongest representations to be made, to induce the Nizam to recall the detachment of Monsieur Raymond." In case of refusal, the resident was even instructed to threaten him with the march of a body of English troops to his frontier. The apprehensions of the English government were increased by some French officers, prisoners at Madras, who were detected in a

[1] 1*s*. 3*d*.

[2] In his Minute, 15th June, 1795.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

project of escape, and suspected of a design to join M. Raymond.

1795.

Whether the Nizam could have been led on to risk the displeasure of the English, or whether the knowledge of his defenceless condition would soon have brought him back to court their support, sufficient time was not afforded to try. On the 28th of June, his eldest son Ali Jah fled from the capital, and placed himself in open rebellion; when his fears were so vehemently excited, that he applied himself with the utmost eagerness to recover the friendship of the English. He agreed to the recall of Raymond's corps from the district of Kurpah; and warmly solicited the return of the subsidiary force. The battalions were ordered to join him with the greatest possible expedition; but before they were able to arrive, an action had taken place, in which Ali Jah was made prisoner. He did not long survive his captivity.[1] The Nizam, however, enjoyed but a few months tranquillity, when another member of his family revolted, at the head of a large body of troops. In quelling this rebellion, and recovering the fort of Rachore, which the insurgents had occupied, the English battalions had an opportunity of rendering conspicuous service.

The Nizam, though brought again to a sufficient sense of his dependance upon the English, could not help reflecting that from them he had nothing to expect in seeking the means of his defence against that insatiate neighbour, whom nothing less than his ruin

[1] According to Capt. Grant, Ali Jah, unable to face his father, put an end to his existence by poison before he reached the capital. Mahr. Hist. 3, 119.—W.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 7.

1795.

would content; nor could he forbear turning with particular favour to that body of his troops, on whom, in contending with the Mahrattas, his principal dependance must rest. The value of M. Raymond's corps had risen in his estimation by the activity which it had displayed in the reduction of Ali Jah. Its numbers and appointments were increased; additional lands for its support were assigned to its commander; and arsenals and founderies were established for its equipment. The abilities of M. Raymond qualified him to improve the favourable sentiments of his prince; the discipline and equipment of his corps were carried to the highest perfection, of which his circumstances would admit; and his connexions with the principal officers of the government were industriously cultivated and enlarged. He was not anxious to avoid those little displays, by which the fears and hatred of the English were most likely to be inflamed. The colours of the French republic were borne by his battalions; and the cap of liberty was engraved on their buttons. While a detachment of this corps was stationed on the frontier of the Company's territories, a partial mutiny was raised in a battalion of Madras sepoys. It was ascribed, of course, to the intrigues of the French abominable officers. Whether this was, or was not the fact; two native commissioned officers, with a number of men, went over to the French.

It was by no means without jealousy and apprehension, that the English government beheld the progress of a French interest in the councils of the Nizam. That Prince declared his readiness to dis-

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

miss the rival corps, provided the English subsidiary force was so increased, and its service so regulated, as to render it available for his defence. This, however, the desire of standing fair with the Mahrattas dissuaded, and a succedaneum was devised. It was thought expedient to encourage the entrance of English adventurers into the service of the Nizam, who might form a rival corps to counterbalance the French. But the English were less qualified than the French for this species of adventure; there was no man to be found whose abilities and address could balance those of M. Raymond; and this project totally failed.

An event, in the mean time, occurred, which materially affected the politics of this part of India. On the 27th of October, 1795, happened the death of the young Peshwa, Madhoo Row;[1] and introduced the most serious divisions among the Mahratta chiefs. Nanah Furnavese desired to place upon the vacant throne an infant whom he could use as a tool. Bajee Rao, undoubted heir, the son of Ragoba, was supported by the influence of Sindia. In these circumstances, Nanah Furnavese was anxious to strengthen himself by the alliance of the Nizam. He released Azeem ul Omrah, opened a negotiation with that minister on behalf of his master; and concluded a treaty, by which all the cessions extorted at Kurdla were resigned. In the mean time, Sindia

[1] Madhoo Row, the Pershwa, although in his twenty first year, was kept by Nana Furnavese, in a state of rigid controul which preyed upon his spirits, so that a fixed melancholy seized on his mind, and on the morning of the 20th October, 1795, he deliberately threw himself from a terrace in the palace, by which he was so much hurt that he died of the injuries he received, two days afterwards. Mahr. Hist. 3, 126.—W.

hastened to Poonah, with an army which his rival was unable to oppose; and Bajee Row was placed upon the musnud of Poona. The treaty with the minister of the Nizam was of course annulled; but a new one was concluded, by which the Nizam was required to make good only one fourth of the cessions and payments which had been fixed by the convention of Kurdla.[1]

The intercourse with Tippoo, during the administration of Sir John Shore, was bounded by the execution of the treaty of Seringapatam. When the sons of Tippoo were restored,[2] the officer who conducted them was empowered to make overtures towards a more amicable connection, provided a favourable disposition appeared on the part of the Sultan. But the pride of that Prince was too much wounded to consort with friendship; and on this occasion, the tyrant, as the English called him, disdained to practise hyprocrisy. He received the officer with frigid civility.

[1] These transactions are very differently related by Capt. Grant. The minister of the Nizam was released, not by Nana Furnavese, but by Parashram Bhao the new minister of Poonah, with Sindia's concurrence, the payment of whose troops by a sum of money to be paid by the Nizam, was the main inducement to the liberation of his minister. In the subsequent intrigues by which Bajee Rao was made Peshwa, in opposition to Parashram Bhao, the Nizam took part with Nanah Furnavese, in consequence of which the treaty of Mhar was formed. By this the Nizam engaged to aid Nana Furnavese with a considerable force, and in return, the Mahratta relinquished the territory ceded by the treaty of Kurdla, the bills which had been granted for the money payments then extorted, and acknowledged the claims of the Nizam to certain districts near Delhi. All contested points were mutually abandoned, and the Mahratta claims were to be settled, in future, annually. The Chouth of the Subah of Beder being considered the private property of the Peshwa, Nana confined himself to a promise of recommending that it should be given up when Bajee Rao was restored to his authority. Mahr. Hist. 3, 142. Note.—W.

[2] 29th March, 1794.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

Though Lord Cornwallis, upon taking the reins of the Company's government, had agreed with the Nabob of Oude, that the government of his country should be divided into two parts, of which the one, namely the business of defence, and all transactions with foreign states, should belong to the Company, and the other, namely, the internal administration, including the collection of the revenue, the coercion of the people, and the distribution of justice, should, without interference or control, belong to himself; the English rulers had, nevertheless, observed the extraordinary vices of his government with great solicitude, as leading necessarily to that desolation of the country, with which the payment of the Company's subsidy would soon be incompatible. On the visit of Lord Cornwallis to Lucknow, in the first year of his administration, "I cannot," he said, "express how much I was concerned, during my short residence at the capital of the Vizir, and my progress through his dominions, to be witness of the disordered state of his finances and government, and of the desolated appearance of the country."[1] The Directors, with an extraordinary candour, declared, that the vices of the native government were not the only cause of this desolation; that for a great part of it the vices of their own administration were justly accountable. "Under a system," they say, "defec-

[1] Letter from Lord Cornwallis, dated, "On the Ganges, 16th Nov. 1787;" Papers relating to India, printed by the House of Commons in 1806, No. 2. p. 4. In the same letter his Lordship says, the Nabob, "urged, as apologies—that whilst he was not certain of the extent of our demands upon him, he had no real interest in being economical in his expences; and that while we interfered in the internal management of his affairs, his own authority, and that of his ministers, were despised by his own subjects."

tive in almost every part of it, and the abuses which arose out of that system, the present unfortunate state of the country may, in our opinion, be fairly attributed to a combination of causes. Among these is a claim which is now very wisely relinquished, of right of pre-emptions, and of exemptions from duties, in the province of Oude; made, and exercised, by contractors employed in providing the investment; and which in the opinion of Lord Cornwallis, has essentially contributed to its ruin. The immense drain of specie from that country of late years, amounting, from February 1794, to September 1783, to the enormous sum of two crores and thirty-nine lacs of rupees, exclusive of what may have been sent down to Calcutta to answer the bills drawn for the payment of the troops, and on private account, stands foremost in our opinion, among the causes that have operated so much to its prejudice."[1] Though the Directors saw but imperfectly the mode in which connexion with their government had been ruinous to Oude, they had the merit of tracing in a general way, the relation between cause and effect.[2]

In the year 1792 died Hyder Beg Khan, the minister. As the Nabob was a cipher in the hands of his minister, and the minister was a mere instrument in the hands of the Company, this was an event which deeply interested the Company's government. The Nabob appointed a person of the name of Hossein Reza Khan, who had enjoyed the principal share of his confidence even in the

[1] Political Letter to the Gov.-Gen. 8th April, 1789; printed papers, ut supra, p. 5.

[2] The mystery is explained in a subsequent page.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

time of the deceased minister, to execute provisionally the duties of the vacant office. As this person, however, was but little acquainted with the business of revenue, Raja Tickait Roy, to whom that business was confided under Hyder Beg, was placed at the head of the financial department. The final election remained till the pleasure of the Governor-General should be known; who satisfied of the inclination of both the men to rely upon the English government, and not acquainted with any persons who were better qualified, signified his approbation of the choice of the Nabob; and, on condition of their good behaviour, gave to the new ministers assurance of his support. The influence of the new ministers was still less able, than that of their predecessors, to limit either the expenses of the Vizir, or the ruinous exactions upon the people which those expenses, the English subsidy, and the extortions of the tax-gatherers imposed. In the month of January, 1793, Lord Cornwallis thought it necessary to write to the Vizir a solemn letter of expostulation and advice. "On my return," said he, "from the war in the Deccan, I had the mortification to find that, after a period of five years, the evils which prevailed at the beginning of that time had increased; that your finances had fallen into a worse state by an enormous accumulated debt; that the same oppressions continue to be exercised by rapacious and overgrown aumils towards the ryots; and that not only the subjects and merchants of your own dominions, but those residing under the Company's protection, suffered many exactions contrary to the commercial

treaty, from the custom-house officers, from Zemindars, aumils, and others."

The Governor-General then proceeded to pen advices, which, though they were lost upon a sensual and profligate prince, will not be lost upon the people of England. "As in a state," said he, "the evils that are practised, by the lower class of men, are to be attributed to the example held out to them by their superiors, and to their connivance, or to their weak government; so am I obliged to represent, that all the oppressions and extortions committed by the aumils on the peasantry, take their source in the connivance and irregularities of the administration of Lucknow."

His meaning, as he himself explains it, is, That an expensive government is, by the very nature of things, an unjust and oppressive government; and that expense, when it proceeds to a certain pitch, is the cause, not of misery alone, but of ruin and desolation. "Though the Company's subsidy," said he, "is at present paid up with regularity, yet I cannot risk my reputation, nor neglect my duty, by remaining a silent spectator of evils which will, in the end, and perhaps that end is not very remote, render abortive even your Excellency's earnest desire that the subsidy should be punctually paid. Thus, I recommend economy in your own household disbursements, as the first measure, whence all other corrections are to take place.—I do not neglect the dignity of your station: nor am I actuated by views for the Company's subsidy only. Your dignity does not flow from a splendid retinue; and unnecessary establishment of household servants, elephants, sumptuous ceremonies, and other circumstances of

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. similar nature: But from a just and wise administration of your government and finances."[1]

1795. Just before the departure of Lord Cornwallis the new ministers repaired to Calcutta; in order more fully to explain the deplorable state in which the government and population of the country were placed, and to pray for counsel and support in conducting the affairs of a prodigal government and an impoverished people. The Governor-General, before leaving India, addressed to the Vizir another letter, of great length, from Madras. In this he repeats, that the effects of an expensive government are two, First, the oppression and misery of the people; and secondly, the fall of the government itself. "It is well known," says he; "not only throughout Hindustan, but to all Europe, that the revenues of your Excellency's dominions are diminished beyond all conjecture.—Does not this consideration alarm your Excellency?—Can any thing but ruin result from such circumstances? Are not these facts a decisive proof of tyranny, extortion, and mismanagement, in the aumils? And, what must be the situation of the ryots who are placed under such people?—But your Excellency knows, that the prayers of the oppressed are attended to by the Almighty; and often call down his vengeance upon their oppressors.—History confirms the observation, by exhibiting innumerable examples of monarchies overturned, and families effaced from the earth, by a violation of justice in the sovereign, or neglect in him to enforce its laws."

He continues; "The evils flowing from this

[1] Letter from Lord Cornwallis to the Vizir, dated 29th Jan. 1793; printed papers ut supra, p. 11—13.

source would have been less felt, if, in proportion as the revenues declined, a diminution of expenses had taken place. But profusion, in fact, was the cause of the first evil: and the continuance of it increased its magnitude."

He adds, "All the world concurs in encomiums upon the dignity and splendour which adorned the court of your illustrious father; but his splendour did not arise from the gaudiness of equipage, from frivolous dissipation, or from profuse expenditure. He well knew, that the best ornament of sovereignty is justice: that due economy is the source of order and dignity: that the true splendour of a court is derived from equity and wisdom."

"If," says he, "the information which I have received of the state of the country be true, the disorders exceed all bounds, and all description. The consequence is, that the revenues are collected, without system, by force of arms; that the aumils (revenue agents) are left to plunder uncontrouled; and the ryots have no security from oppression, nor means of redress for injustice exercised upon them."[1]

In May, 1794, Sir John Shore, in his letter to the Resident at Lucknow, said; "It has long been my anxious wish, no less than that of my predecessor, the Marquis Cornwallis, to prevail upon the Nabob Vizir to arrange the internal administration of his country, and establish it upon principles calculated to promote the happiness of his subjects and the permanency of his own authority. I cannot, therefore, observe, without regret, that his Excellency does not appear to have adopted any measures

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, p. 16, 17, 19.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

for this purpose, in consequence of the letter addressed to him by Marquis Cornwallis from Madras, and which I delivered to his ministers in Calcutta, with the most serious recommendation to them to use their utmost exertions in giving effect to the advice and representations of his Lordship."[1]

Fyzoollah Khan, the Rohilla chief, to whom the district of Rampore had been preserved, at the time when the rest of his nation were exterminated from the country to which they had given their name, died, at an advanced age, in 1794, leaving the country over which he had ruled, in a high state of cultivation and prosperity. The succession went to Mohammed Ali, his eldest son, who was duly confirmed by the Vizir, and acknowledged by the principal Rohilla chiefs. His younger brother Gholaum Mohammed, an ambitious man, contrived in a little time to get him into his power; when he put him to death; and sent a large present to the Vizir, with a promise of augmented tribute, if he were confirmed in the government of Rampore. Though the murdered Prince left a son, in a state of nonage, the Vizir was by no means disinclined to the proposition of Gholaum Mohammed.[2] It was, however, a proceeding of too much importance to be concluded without the permission of the British

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, p. 14.

[2] It may be doubted if there is sufficient authority for this insinuation. According to Mustajab Khan, Mohammed Ali was not put to death until after the Vizir's interference in his favour. "A letter having been received from the Nawab Vizir, requiring Gholam Mohammed to send his brother to Lucknow without delay, and threatening vengeance if the order were not obeyed, the conspirators decided on putting Mohammed Ali to death, and accordingly Ahmed Khan shot him while he slept." It was then asserted that he had destroyed himself, but the story was not credited, and Asoph ud Dowlah, with his forces, attended by Mr. Cherry, immediately marched from Lucknow. Life of Hafez Rehmet Khan, 134.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

government; and that was refused. The British troops, under Sir Robert Abercromby, joined by such forces as the Vizir could afford, were ordered to march against the usurper, and treat him as a rebel. It was the purpose of the Governor-General, to wrest the country entirely from the family of Fyzoollah Khan, notwithstanding the rights of the son of Mohammed Ali, guaranteed by the British government;[1] and notwithstanding the rights of the people of the Country, happy under the frugal government of the Rohilla chief, menaced with misery and ruin under the exactions of the Vizir, to which, with a full knowledge of the circumstances, the British ruler was about to condemn them. The rapidity of Sir Robert Abercromby anticipated the arrival of the instructions which were forwarded to this effect. A battle was fought at Bitowrah, in which, after making a partial impression upon the British line, the Rohillas were defeated. Negotiation followed, and an arrangement was made. The treasures of the late prince, Fyzoollah Khan, were given up to the Vizir. And a jaghire of ten lacs of revenue, under the express guarantee of the English government, was granted to Ahmed Ali, the son of Mohammed Ali.[2]

The retrograde movement was uninterrupted in the Nabob's affairs. "The exigencies of his government," as we are informed by the Directors, "were supplied by loans, on terms increasing in proportion

[1] Sir John Malcolm, Sketch of the Political History of India, p. 195.

[2] Collection of Treaties and Engagements, with the Native Princes and States of Asia, &c. printed for the East India Company in 1812, p. 150—161.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

to the sums demanded, and the discharge of one debt was effected, not from the revenue, but by contracting another of an increasing interest." The ministers Hussein Reza Khan, and Raja Tickait Roy, had become odious to him, by opposing obstructions to his will: and he accused them of the embarrassments which had grown upon him during their administration. His desire was to make Raja Jeeo Loll his minister; who had been one of his intimates for several years, and professed absolute subserviency. The aversion of the English government to this minion was not unknown. The Nabob therefore was advised to assume the appearance of acting as his own minister; while the business and power, in reality, passed into the hands of Jeeo Loll.

The English troops, employed in the country of the Vizir, were always on the increase. Instead of the single brigade, which Hastings had pronounced sufficient, even the two brigades, for which Lord Cornwallis had made provision, in the subsidy of fifty lacs, were now exceeded. In their dispatch of the 22nd of April, 1796, the Directors commanded the two regiments of native cavalry, serving under the Presidency of Bengal, to be augmented to four; and, "in order to relieve the Company from a considerable part of the expense, they directed that every possible effort should be made to induce the Vizir to disband his own useless cavalry, and to apply a part of the sums expended in their support to defraying a part of the charges which the Company incurred by the proposed augmentation."[1] With

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, p. 28.

this proposition, the Vizir, at first, would by no means comply. And in March, 1797, the Governor-General paid a visit to Lucknow, for the "two avowed objects," as he himself expressed it, "of inducing the Vizir to establish a reform in his administration, and to pay part of the new cavalry establishment, which he had already peremptorily refused. The influence of the British ruler was not entirely without success; an agreement was obtained from the wretched Vizir to add to his former subsidy the expense of one European and one native regiment of English cavalry, provided the annual amount should not exceed five and a half lacs of rupees; and Tuffuzel Hussein Khan, a man in whose probity and talents the Governor-General placed great reliance, was appointed minister.

Only a few months elapsed, when, after a short illness, the Vizir expired. The eldest of his brothers was Saadut Ali, who, in fear of intrigues, had been compelled to reside on a pension at Benares. To the succession of Mirza Ali, the eldest son of Asoph ud Dowla, Saadut Ali offered objections, asserting that neither he, nor any other of the reputed children of the late Vizir, was really his offspring: and he urged his own pretensions to the vacant throne. The arbiter in this great dispute was the Governor-General. The acknowledgment of the late Vizir who had treated Mirza Ali as his son and successor; the undoubted principle of the Moslem law, which renders that acknowledgment a valid title; the acquiescence of the Begums, the wife and mother

[1] Printed Papers, ut supra, p. 28.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1797.

of Asoph ud Dowla; the concurrence of the capital; and the danger of admitting reports on the filiation of princes to decide the question of their succession, swayed the mind of the Governor-General; and Mirza Ali, commonly known by the name of Vizir Ali, was placed on the musnud, and recognised by the English government as Nabob of Oude.

The young sovereign had not long enjoyed his power and dignity, when complaints were received by the Governor-General, both respecting his title, and respecting his conduct. The situation of affairs appeared to require the presence of the English ruler; and he began his journey to Lucknow. Upon his arrival, he found a scene of intrigue of extraordinary activity, and extraordinary complication. The elder Begum, having interfered with the conduct of the Nabob, had been urged to return to Fyzabad; and animosity succeeded to friendship. Almas Ali Khan, who had been an object of distrust to the British government for many years, and forced to keep aloof from public affairs, had so successfully employed his leisure, in carrying on the business of renter, that a great proportion of the country was now placed in his hands: and he was the most powerful individual in the state. Upon her quarrel with the Nabob, the Begum had resigned herself to the councils of this man; who advised an apparent reconciliation with the Nabob. "On my arrival at Lucknow," says the Governor-General, "the confederacy between the Nabob and Begum appeared indissoluble, and it was the opinion of the minister that they could not be disunited. The principal adviser of the Begum was

Almas, either directly, or through (her principal eunuch) Jewahur Ali Khan. And Hossein Reza Khan, and Tickait Roy, ranged under their banners. With the Nabob, his father-in-law, Sherf Ali Khan, was supposed to have the most influence. The object of all parties was to oppose the English influence."

Presently the views of the actors began to disclose themselves. And a malady which attacked the Nabob, the measles, or small-pox, shortly after the arrival of the Governor-General, afforded a favourable opportunity for intrigue.—" I confess," says the Governor-General, " without reserve, that I never was involved in a scene of more perplexity and profligacy."

" On the 29th of December," (I still use the language of the Governor-General's report,) " Almas, who had most sedulously studied appearances, waited on the minister, and entered into conferences with him which lasted several days. He began with strong complaints of the conduct of Vizir Ali, whom he designated by a most opprobrious term. He spoke of him as spurious and profligate; as a man who would ruin the country by his vices and profusion. He mentioned the earnest wish of the Begum and himself, that he should be deposed, and some one of the sons of Suja ud Dowla, be placed on the musnud, excluding all the sons of Asoph ud Dowla, as spurious." The same representations were successively repeated to the Governor-General, and to the Governor-General in company with the Commander-in-Chief. Mirza Jungly, a brother of the late Nabob, younger than

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1797.

Saadut Ali, was the person whom the Begum and Almas combined in recommending. And "a large pecuniary sacrifice," says the Governor-General, "was promised, as a compensation for my acquiescence."—"Almas," he continues, "acts in the name of the Begum; and while he pretends to disavow, on her part, all wish to interfere in the administration, his propositions to me were directly calculated to place it in her power."

Great industry and skill had been employed in prepossessing the mind of the Governor-General with the most unfavourable opinion of the young Nabob, as a man between whose character, and the interests of the English, an irreconcileable contrariety was placed. He was represented as extremely profuse in his expenditure, and therefore, likely to absorb the funds from which annual payments to the English might proceed; as of a violent, ungovernable will, and therefore unlikely to be obedient to the English; and finally, as altogether averse to the English, and likely to use his utmost endeavours to free himself from their yoke.

The belief of these representations, communicated to the Governor-General, appears to have decided the question. It prepared his mind for annexing weight to any evidence which might be preferred of the spuriousness of the man whom he wished not to reign. It was no objection to the legitimacy of the Nabob, that he was not the son of the Begum, who had no child; that he was the son of a female, menially employed in the zenana. He was acknowledged by Asoph ud Dowla as his son, and, according to the laws of the Moslems, that was

1797.

enough. Tehseen Ali Khan, however, a confidential eunuch of the late Vizir, told the following story; that the mother of Vizir Ali had a husband of her own rank; was never confined to the zenana, but quitted it daily, as is customary with menials of the same description, and went to her husband's house; that Vizir Ali was not the son of the Nabob, but purchased of his mother for 500 rupees after his birth; that it was customary for the Nabob, having no progeny, to purchase women who were pregnant, and bring up their children as his own; and that this was the origin of all the children who were now regarded as the offspring of Asoph ud Dowla.[1]

In this statement, the only point of real importance was, whether Asoph ud Dowla was, or thought that he was, the father of the child produced by the mother of Vizir Ali. Tehseen Ali Khan said, that he was not, and did not know of her pregnancy till after the birth of the child. And upon this story, told privately to the Governor-General by Tehseen, who complained of having been treated with injustice by the Nabob, and who might have been suborned by his enemies; told without confrontation with the public, without confrontation with the Nabob, without cross examination, without counter evidence, without hearing any thing the party affected might have to adduce in his behalf, without pushing the inquiry by examination of other persons to whom the secrets of the zenana might be known, and corroborated only by what he was told was the

[1] Minute of Sir John Shore, detailing the measures which led to the deposition of Vizir Ali, &c. printed papers, ut supra, No. 1. p. 1.

BOOK VI. CHAP. 7.

1797.

public opinion, did the Governor-General declare, that a man whom he had acknowledged as Nabob of Oude, and who succeeded to the throne with the apparent concurrence of all ranks, except the single voice of Saadut Ali, was not the son of the late Vizir, and ought to be displaced from the throne.

It is impossible to read the account of this transaction, drawn up by the Governor-General, and not to be impressed with a conviction of his sincerity, and his desire to do justice. But it is easy also to perceive how much his understanding was bewildered; and impossible not to confess that he decided against the unfortunate Nabob the great question of a kingdom, upon evidence upon which a court of English law would not have decided against him a question of a few pounds."[1]

When the resolution of deposing Vizir Ali was taken, the choice of a successor was easily made.

[1] The tale of Tehseen, said the Governor-General, concorded with public opinion. But what knew the Governor-General about the public opinion of Oude, except what he was told? And what was he told, except by a few individuals who surrounded him; and who concurred, for their own purposes, in wishing Vizir Ali to be deposed? The utmost that can be said for the tale of Tehseen is, that it is not in itself incredible, or, perhaps, improbable. But that was not the question. The only question was, whether there was or was not evidence to establish the allegations. Undoubtedly his private conversation with the Governor-General, aided by what a few individuals *told* the Governor-General about public opinion —was not evidence sufficient to vest allegations with the character of facts. —M. The corroborative evidence was not what the Governor-General was told by disinterested persons to be the public opinion only, but it was their own belief and conviction. Various individuals were consulted, of whom many were impartial witnesses, and they concurred in the opinion of the public, the accuracy of which is never questioned in India. There is no doubt that Vizir Ali was not the son of Asoph-ad-dowla, and his maintenance on the throne would have been the perpetuation of an act of great injustice to Sadat Ali. See Minute of Governor General, printed in the 1st Vol. of the Asiatic Register.—W.

Saadut Ali was the eldest surviving son of Suja-ad-dowla; and would not, as Mirza Jungly, become a tool in the hands of the Begum and Almas. When the treaty proposed by the Governor-General was communicated to Saadut Ali, it was not the time to dispute about terms. He gave his consent to every particular. He then proceeded to Cawnpore; from which he was escorted by a large body of European troops to Lucknow. The military force of the country was almost wholly English. The Nabob was, therefore, completely helpless; and Saadut Ali was proclaimed, without opposition, on the 21st of January, 1798.

The terms, to which he had at first assented, were somewhat modified after he came to the throne. It was finally established, that the annual subsidy should be raised to seventy-six lacs of rupees, and that the fort of Allahabad should be made over to the English. It was also arranged that the regular amount of the English forces stationed in Oude should be 10,000 men, including all descriptions; that, if at any time the amount should exceed 13,000 men, the expense of all the troops above that number should be defrayed by the Nabob; if it should fall below 8000 a proportional deduction should be made. The Nabob further agreed, to pay twelve lacs of rupees to the English, as compensation money, for the expense of placing him on the musnud; and not, without their consent, to hold communication with any foreign state, to employ no Europeans in his service, or to permit any to settle in his dominions. Finally he agreed to allow a lac and a half of rupees as an annual pension to the deposed Vizir Ali, who

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1798.

was removed to Benares; and to afford a suitable maintenance to the rest of the reputed children of his brother the deceased Nabob."[1]

The transaction had one attractive feature; that of gain to the Company: And it received the most cordial approbation of the powers, ministerial, and directorial, at home. The political letter to Bengal, dated 15th May, 1799, after a full commentary upon the proceedings, thus declares: "Having taken this general view of the subject, with a minute attention, however, to all the papers and proceedings, we are, upon the whole, decidedly of opinion, that the late Governor-General, Lord Teignmouth, in a most arduous situation, and under circumstances of much delicacy and embarrassment, conducted himself with great temper, impartiality, ability, and firmness; and that he finished a long course of faithful services by planning and carrying into execution an arrangement, which not only redounds highly to his own honour, but which will also operate to the reciprocal advantage of the Company, and the Nabob Vizir."[2]

On the 1st of August, 1792, Sir Charles Oakely succeeded General Medows, as Governor of Fort St. George, and President of the Council at Madras. Sir Charles remained in the government till the 7th of September, 1794, when Lord Hobart was placed at the head of the Carnatic Presidency. On the 13th of October, 1795, died, at the age of seventy-eight, the Nabob Mohammed Ali, Wala Jah; and

[1] Printed Papers, ut supra, p. 19—22.—Collection of Treaties, ut supra, p. 177.

[2] Printed Papers, ut supra, p. 31.

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

was succeeded by Omdut ul Omrah, his eldest son, From the date of the treaty, framed by Lord Cornwallis in 1792, the payments of the Nabob, being in years of peace, had, through the agency of the money-lenders, been regular. But the country, made over to the cruel exactions of this description of men, had rapidly declined. The continued operation of the same causes threatened to extinguish the resources of the government; and, though no attempt had been made to ameliorate the state of affairs, during the life of Mohammed Ali, the succession of Omdut ul Omrah appeared to Lord Hobart to present a favourable opportunity for introducing those reforms of which the necessity had become so urgent.

On the 24th of the same month in which the Nabob died, the President deemed it expedient to place on record, by a Minute in Council, a description of the ruinous course in which affairs had proceeded, under the arrrangement of 1792. The source of the evil was laid in "the usurious loans, which," says he, "it has long been the practice, principally among the European gentlemen of the Presidency, to make to the Durbar for mortgages upon the different provinces of the Carnatic." Some of the principal houses of business at Madras, said the Governor, or even some of the Company's servants, enter into an agreement with the Nabob for the payment of the sums which may have become due to the Company's treasury. They receive a mortgage upon a portion of the territory. To render this availing, they stipulate for the appointment of the manager of the territory. It is also

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

requisite to establish an understanding with the military commanding officer of the district. And, then, the chain of power is complete. Then, the unhappy ryots are delivered over to the uncontrolled operations of men who have an interest in nothing but exacting the greatest sums in the shortest time, of men, "hardened by practice, and with consciences lulled to rest by the delusive opiate of interest upon interest."[1]

It is not in the way of direct exaction alone, that the mischief was accomplished. "Another endeavour," says the President, "of those engaged in a concern of this nature is to enhance the price of grain by artificial means, lest the ordinary price of that article, the sole subsistence of the natives, should fail to answer the large advance of money, and the exorbitant advantage expected upon it, by the soukars," or subordinate money-lenders, to whose ruinous assistance the ryots were compelled to have recourse. "The means of effecting this purpose," continues the magistrate, "is easy; for the necessitous condition of the ryots compels them to dispose of their grain as soon as it comes into their possession, in order to satisfy the urgent demands upon them which I have already described: the purchasers of this grain monopolize it, until the demand advances the price. If, towards the expiration of the season, any part of the grain should yet remain on hand, the expedient is, to divide the whole quantity, in whatever condition it may be, among the inhabitants: and the people are compelled (in general the

[1] Papers relating to the Affairs of the Carnatic, No. 2; printed by order of the House of Commons, in 1803.

manufacturers) to take it at a valuation considerably above the market price."

Such was the general course of oppression. The modes were infinite. " The subject," says the indignant Governor, "is exhaustless."[1]

"After this exposition, no comment," he cries, " can be required, to show that this species of government, if it deserves the name of government, contains the most grievous oppression of the people, the certain impoverishment of the country, and, consequently, the inevitable decay of revenue."

A fact is here very forcibly urged upon our attention, of which it is important to find the true explanation. Under their dependence upon the English government, it has been seen, that the people of Oude and the Carnatic, two of the noblest portions of India, were, by misgovernment, plunged into a state of wretchedness, with which no other part of India, hardly any part of the earth, had any thing to compare. In what manner did the dependence of the native states upon the English tend to produce those horrid effects? The difficulty of the answer is not very great. The oppressions of the native go-

[1] " I should hesitate," he says, " to advance, if I was not supported by the authority of public record, that during a late scarcity of grain in the southern provinces, the *Manager* had the hardiness to write a public complaint, to the Company's collector, against the Polygars, for selling grain to the inhabitants.—Nor was the evil removed, without the interposition of this government, who, by sending vessels loaded with grain, induced the monopolizers, from regard to their own interests, to restore their usual supplies to the market." He adds, " As the means of cultivation decrease, the price of grain is enhanced ;—and it is a notorious, but inhuman maxim of eastern finances, [*Query, how much it differs from the principle of an English corn law*]—that a time of scarcity is more productive to the Sirkar than a time of plenty, owing to the price at which the diminished quantity is sold." Papers, ut supra.

1795.

vernments were limited by their weakness. When they received the use of English strength, their oppressions were limited by nothing, but the physical powers of the people to exist under oppression. So ill has the science of government been hitherto understood, that under all the governments which ever yet existed, except perhaps one or two, there is no regular and effective restraint upon bad government, except from the dread of the insurrection and rebellion of the people. In the governments of Asia, this produces no inconsiderable effects; as the frequent revolutions and changes of dynasty abundantly demonstrate. When misery had produced disaffection, and disaffection had increased to a certain height, there was generally some popular leader who offered himself to the nation as an instrument of revenge, and cast the unworthy possessor from his throne. The progress, in general, was rapid, and easy. When oppression produced a decline of revenue, the evident instability of the government deterred lenders; money became wanting to pay the troops; the troops first clamoured and then mutinied; the voice of the nation joined that of the army; a revolution took place; and commonly, for two or three generations, the new family governed comparatively well. Among the small sovereignties of India, misgovernment produced weakness, and weakness invited conquest. The misgovernment, for example, of the Carnatic and Oude, would infallibly have produced the conquest, of the one by Tippoo, and of the other by the Mahrattas: and as a Prince was commonly strong, only because he governed well, to be conquered was among the happiest results

which the people knew. Till, indeed, governments attain that high pitch of excellence, at which they really perform in the best manner, and at the cheapest rate, the services of government to the people, all changes are, in general, for the good of the people. It is the stability of governments, which, before this state of excellence, human nature has to dread. Now it is evident that when the uncontrollable force of a British army is lent to an Indian prince, his subjects are immediately placed without the pale of hope. The Prince is completely set above the only fears, which, in his situation, could operate as a restraint upon his disposition to oppress; that of insurrection, and that of being conquered. The source of almost all oppression, in Asiatic and European governments alike, is the rage of extorting more and more of their earnings from the people. This passion, instead of being abated by connexion with the English, is prodigiously inflamed: when the tributary prince is carried to all the excesses of taxation, not only by his own rapacity, but the necessity of supplying the enormous demands of his European masters; and when his soldiers, as well as people, are kept in abject and hopeless subjection, by the terror of European arms.

The progress of this oppression produced in the English any determinate resolution of reform, only when the visible desolation of the country presented the prospect of a rapidly approaching moment, at which the English subsidy could no longer be found. We have seen what anticipations of this disastrous period the English rulers had already

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1795. expressed with regard to Oude. The danger was still more imminent in the case of the Carnatic. "I cannot," says Lord Hobart, "but look with extreme anxiety to the nature of the security, provided by the treaty of 1792, for those resources on which the British interests on the coast of Coromandel materially depend. I cannot but see that the present system of collecting the revenues of the Carnatic manifestly invalidates that security: and that, whenever a failure may happen in the payment of his Highness's kists, we shall in vain have recourse to it for the recovery of the defalcation."

A palliative, if not a remedy, suggested itself, in the prohibition of loans to the Nabob by Europeans; because, "though the dealings of Soukars (native money-lenders) in the collection of revenue, were not of recent establishment, yet the terms of loans had never been carried to so usurious an extent as since the practice had been introduced among Europeans."

This, however, the Governor declared to be completely ineffectual. "The prohibitory orders hitherto published, have," he says, "all failed of their object: Because the evasion of them is easy to Europeans, through the agency of their native servants; and because the enormous profits which arise from those usurious loans, hold out an irresistible temptation to adventurers. To prohibit the intercourse of Europeans at the Durbar, is ineffectual. Other channels of communication are open; and the superintendent of an usurious loan at Palamcotah conveys his demands to the ears of the Nabob with no less

certainty than he who lives in the precincts of Chepauk. As long, therefore, as his Highness shall be so regardless of his true interests, as to deliver up his provinces, and his people, to public depredation, so long will there be found men, who, in the pursuit of extravagant advantages, will overleap the bounds of discretion and moral obligation."

In these circumstances, what is to be done? "So desperate a malady," said the President, "requires a remedy that shall reach its source. And I have no hesitation in stating my opinion, that there is no mode of eradicating the disease, but by removing the original cause; and placing those districts, which are pledged for the security of his kists, beyond the reach of his Highness's management;" in other words, assuming the collection of the revenue, and the whole of the internal government. And even this was a partial remedy; for though it might alleviate the distress of those particular districts, it left the remaider of the country to all the deplorable consequences of the misgovernment of the Nabob.

The Governor describes, in a style instructive for other occasions, the tissue of interests by which radical reform was opposed. "The disposition," says he, "which his Highness has already evinced to oppose such an arrangement, leaves me no doubt of the real cause. It is not possible to calculate the extent and variety of interests which are involved in this one pursuit. And, though they are subdivided in every direction of the Carnatic, yet at the call of danger they all rally round a common centre. The great houses of business, who are the principal money-lenders at the Durbar, borrow from indi-

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

viduals, who, though not absolutely engaged in the loan itself, are partakers of the speculation in a remote degree, and feel, with no less sensibility than their principals, the approach of danger. *Similarity of interest makes a common cause;* and the great body of interest which is condensed upon this principle, is uniformly exerted to support his Highness in an inflexible resistance against a melioration of system, and to oppose a reformation which I consider essential to the national welfare."[1] This representation is the more worthy of regard, as it is applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to every government under the sun, in which there is need of reform.

On the day following the date of the Minute from which these particulars have been taken, the Governor of Fort St. George addressed a letter to the Governor-General in Council, in which he represents, that, in consequence of several communications which he had with Mr. Dundas, and with Lord Cornwallis, before leaving England, respecting the necessity of a change in that state of things which was established by the treaty of 1792, he had opened a negotiation for that purpose with Omdut ul Omrah; and that he had not communicated his intention to the Supreme Government, or waited for its concurrence, on account of the intrigues of those who, from personal interest, endeavoured to prevent the accomplishment of his object.

The first of the points which the Governor endeavoured to gain, was the transfer of the collections,

[1] See the Minute of Lord Hobart, printed papers, ut supra, p. 99—104.

1795.

including all the powers of internal government, in the districts pledged for the subsidy. The benefits would be; to the Nabob, the saving of the exorbitant interest which the usurers received; to the people, deliverance from extortion; to the Company, security against the desolation of the country. The second point regarded the Southern Polygars. The right of collecting the tribute from the country of the Polygars had been yielded to the Company by the treaty of 1792, but the nominal right of sovereignty reserved to the Nabob. This proved a source of obstruction to the right ordering of the country; and the Governor was desirous of seeing it resigned. In the third place he endeavoured to obtain the cession of the forts in the Carnatic, which, according to an expression in the treaty of Cornwallis, were to be garrisoned by the troops of the Company.

To obtain the consent of the Nabob, Lord Hobart offered to relinquish certain claims, to the amount of thirty lacs of pagodas, or more. The influence of those who had opposite interests prevailed. "It has been with the deepest regret," said the Governor, "that I have found the Nabob unmoved by my entreaties and remonstrances upon this subject: Not that he has been insensible to the justice and expediency of what I have proposed; but, as he has candidly confessed at several interviews with me, that he has not the resolution to comply; informing me that his native ministers and European advisers, so perplexed, plagued, and intimidated him, that he could not venture upon the measure, notwithstanding his conviction that he ought to do so."[1]

[1] President's Minute in Council, 24th November, 1795; printed papers,

BOOK VI
CHAP. 7.

1795.

The Members of the Supreme Government carried their expectations even further than the President of the Council of Madras; for no sooner was the decease of the preceding Nabob known, than they sent to that Governor their instructions, dated the 28th of October, 1795, to endeavour to obtain the consent of Omdut ul Omrah to the cession of all his territories.

Upon the failure of his endeavours to obtain the concurrence of the Nabob, Lord Hobart intimated his intention, to assume the district of Tinivelly, for the liquidation of the debt termed the cavalry loan; and to insist upon possession of the Carnatic forts. To this the Supreme Government objected, as an indirect mode of compelling the Nabob. They argued, that the treaty, in which that loan was not mentioned, gave no right to any assumption of territory for its liquidation; and, although the treaty did say absolutely, and without any specification either of time or circumstances, that "all the forts in the Carnatic were to be garrisoned with the troops of the Company;" as some case had not occurred which was specified in one of the negotiating letters

ut supra, p. 104. Lord Hobart felt what reformers are sure to experience, wherever the interests opposed to reform continue to exist: "I am aware," said he, "of the numerous enemies who will start up against me, for the part I have taken. But I have a shield in the consciousness of an honest execution of my duty, which blunts their arrows, and which will ultimately render all their efforts impotent and unavailable.—I have forborne to bring forward the names of individuals, not because I am not able to do so, but because the subject is above personal considerations.—Let those who have amassed wealth, by such means, enjoy it as well as they can. Let it be my pride to have paid this tribute to suffering humanity, by deterring others from the commission of similar enormities." Ibid. The enemies of reform in India, and the enemies of reform in England, are of one and the same *caste*.

of Lord Cornwallis, the Supreme Government contended that even this measure it was not lawful to enforce.

Lord Hobart was of opinion, That the Nabob had himself infringed the treaty, and thereby liberated the Company from its engagements, by granting assignments, which the treaty prohibited, upon the districts mortgaged for security of his annual payments: That self-preservation, threatened by the rapid desolation of the country, and the loss of resources which it implied, justified the Company in such interference as the necessity of the case required: And, above all, that the people of the Carnatic, to whom, beside the claims of humanity, it would be infamous to suppose, that the Company had not, by sharing the fruits of their labour, contracted sacred obligations, ought not to be sacrificed in millions, to any obligations, to any one man, which it was possible to contract.

On this subject, the Supreme Government declared "That their principles were fairly at issue with those of the Governor of Fort St. George," and appealed to the authorities at home. That jealousy, which was so apt to arise between the heads of the two Presidencies, especially when the head of the Supreme was inferior in rank to the head of the subordinate government, appears on this occasion to have imbittered the opposition of the Governor-General. In the address from the Supreme Government to the Court of Directors, commenting upon the arguments of the Governor of Fort St. George, it is said; "On the language of declamation or intemperance we shall never animadvert, unless

BOOK VI CHAP. 7.

1795.

it becomes necessary to the support of the authority of the Supreme government; leaving it, on this, as on former occasions, to the observation and notice of your Honourable Court." On this expression Lord Hobart remarked; "If I am not to defend my conduct, when attacked—attacked in terms, not indeed of intemperance and declamation, but of cool, deliberate censure and severity, impeaching my character, as a public servant, in a manner not possible to be misunderstood, I am placed in a situation wholly incompatible with a due regard to my own reputation."

As for the principles stated by the Supreme Government as in opposition to his, he remarked that they could only be useful, in as far as they afforded "rules sufficiently definite to refer to, when exigencies called for specific measures of government; but that principles, professedly admitting of deviation, fluctuating with circumstances, neither alluded to, nor enumerated, but to be estimated, as they arise, by the existing government—the propriety, or impropriety of that estimation to depend, not upon precedent, analogy, or any written law, but upon the subsequent opinion of the world—can never be productive of those beneficial effects, avowedly sought for by the Supreme Board."[1] In this instance, the Governor of Fort St. George saw clearly, and justly exposed, the futility of those loose and indefinite expressions of obligation, which are so fondly and frequently made use of by the half-informed persons at the heads of governments;

[1] Letter from Lord Hobart to the Court of Directors; printed papers, ut supra, p. 87—93.

expressions which are so effectual in misleading their understandings; but, at the same time, so fortunately adapted to enlarge the sphere of their arbitrary power.

Though, by the compound opposition of the Supreme Government, and of the powerful class of individuals whose profit depended upon the misgovernment of the country, no reform could be introduced, the war, which the progress of the French revolution brought on with the Dutch, provided for the Governor a sort of triumph, to which the enemies of reform, that is, of mankind, have seldom any objection. In 1795, an armament was fitted out at Madras, which, aided by a squadron of his Majesty's fleet under Admiral Ranier, completely reduced the settlements of the Dutch, on Ceylon, Malacca, Banda, and Amboyna, without any incident of sufficient importance to require a particular description. Their possessions on the Peninsula were likewise subdued; Cochin, after a great resistance. And their grand settlement at the Cape of Good Hope fell into the hands of the English, the same year. In 1797, preparation was made for expeditions against Mauritius, and the Spanish settlement of Manilla. The first division of the armament against Manilla had actually sailed to Penang, the port of rendezvous; when the accounts received of the treaty of Campo Formio, and the suspicions excited of Tippoo and the Mahrattas, frightened the government, after incurring the expense, into a renunciation of both enterprises.

In the beginning of the year 1798, Sir John

BOOK VI CHAP. 7. 1798. Shore, who had been raised to the peerage, by the title of Lord Teignmouth, resigned the government of India, and sailed for England. Lord Clive, who was appointed to succeed Lord Hobart in December, 1797, arrived at Madras on the 21st of August, 1798.

CHAPTER VIII.

Lord Mornington Governor-General.—Agents of Tippoo at the Isle of France.—Governor-General resolves on immediate War.—Import of the Circumstances.—Opinions in India.—Nizam Ali receives more English Troops and dismisses the French.—Unfruitful Negotiations at Poonah.—Progression of Governor-General's Demands.—War begins.—Plan of the Campaign.—March of the Army.—Siege of Seringapatam.—Alarming Situation of the British Army in regard to Food.—Seringapatam taken, and the Sultan killed.—Division and Settlement of the conquered Country.

When the play of private interest is not instructive, either by the inferences which may be drawn from it, or by the consequences to which it leads, it escapes the curiosity of the historian, whose views are directed by utility alone. Whatever share

ministerial intrigues may have had, in the fluctuations of council, which attended the choice of a new Governor-General, it is sufficient for us to relate, that after Lord Hobart was appointed, on the 23rd of October, 1793, to be Governor at Madras, he was nominated, on the 24th of December, in the same year, to succeed the Marquis Cornwallis, as Governor-General of India. That, enjoying honourable and affluent prospects at home, and at that time filling an office of high dignity and trust, Lord Hobart would not have left his country for less than the assurance of the highest place in India, was well understood. Ministerial volition, of course, was the origin of both the one appointment and the other. The administration, however, of Sir John Shore, who succeeded to the place of Governor-General, as senior member of the council, immediately upon the resignation of Lord Cornwallis, was not interrupted till the month of March, in the year 1797; when Lord Cornwallis was nominated a second time to fill the offices of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. The appointment was announced to the different Presidencies in India; and a measure so extraordinary, seemed to declare that there was something extraordinary in the cause of it. Extraordinary as it was, it remained without effect. In the month of October, of the same year, it was notified to the different Presidencies, that the Earl of Mornington was appointed to be Governor-General, in lieu of Marquis Cornwallis. He was appointed, it was said, "under circumstances, and for reasons, of a peculiar nature." The Directors added, that "various circumstances

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

had induced the Marquis to resign his appointments."[1] Such were the mysterious terms to which the actors thought fit to confine themselves.

The Earl of Mornington had recently distinguished himself by a brilliant speech, in the House of Lords, against Jacobinism, which recommended him to the ministry, as a personage both of good principles, and of good abilities. The breach of faith to Lord Hobart it was proposed to compensate, viz. by money; and that out of the Company's purse. A proposition was brought forward for bestowing upon him a pension of 1500*l.* per annum, and this, after being once rejected in the General Court, was, nevertheless, by the due application of influence, finally confirmed. The Directors, when pushed for their reasons, hinted, that the attempt of Lord Hobart to transfer to the Company the civil, as well as the military, government of the Carnatic, was, in some way, which they said it was delicate to explain, the cause which rendered it inexpedient that he should continue longer in India. "That attempt," they observed, "whether owing to the ardour of Lord Hobart, or some other cause, unfortunately failed. This failure involved his Lordship in an altercation with the Supreme Government; upon which the Court of Directors thought it right to support their Government-General and to recall Lord Hobart."[2]

[1] Public Letter to Fort St. George, 18th Oct. 1797. Papers relating to the Affairs of the Carnatic, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 10th August, 1803, i, 244.

[2] Speech of the Chairman in the General Court, 6th Feb. 1798. See the Report of the Debate, in the Asiatic Annual Register, vol. i.

Lord Mornington arrived at Calcutta on the 17th of May, 1798, carrying out with him a mind more than usually inflamed with the ministerial passions then burning in England; and in a state peculiarly apt to be seized both with dread and with hatred of any power that was French. He had possessed but little time for acquainting himself with the complicated affairs of India,[1] when all his attention was attracted to a particular point. On the 8th of June, about three weeks after his arrival, a paper was received at Calcutta, which purported to be a proclamation issued by the Governor at the Isle of France. The paper imported, that two ambassadors had arrived from Tippoo Sultan, with letters addressed to the constituted authorities of the island, and despatches to be forwarded to the government of France; that the object of the embassy was, to propose an alliance offensive and defensive with the French; and to request a supply of troops for the purpose of a war against the English; a war, which, with an earnest desire to expel the said English from India, the Sultan was ready to commence, as soon as the French should arrive to assist him. The proclamation then invited the citizens to

[1] Lord Mornington had been one of the commissioners for the affairs of India since 1795, and was not new to them upon his appointment. On his arrival at the Cape of Good Hope in February, 1798, he found the despatches from the India governments on their way to England, which afforded him full information on the state of affairs in India. He had also an opportunity of communicating personally with Major Kirkpatrick, late Resident at Hyderabad. The period allowed him therefore for becoming acquainted with the objects to which his attention as Governor-General was likely to be directed, was not restricted to a few weeks after his arrival. See Despatches from the Marquess Wellesley, vol. i. Letter from the Cape.—W.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 8.

1798.

offer their services, on the liberal terms which the ambassadors of the Sultan were ready to offer.

This paper, which the Governor-General calls truly an "extraordinary publication," he was at first inclined to regard as a forgery; because, if a scheme, of the nature here described, were really entertained, it was so much the interest both of Tippoo and the French, to conceal, and an act of such contemptible folly, to divulge it, that such a total want of all capacity for business was scarcely credible, on the part either of a man intrusted with the government of the Isle of France, or of men whom Tippoo would choose for a delicate and important commission.

The Governor-General, nevertheless, received so violent an impulse from the paper, that he despatched a copy of it, even on the following day, to General Harris, the Commander-in-Chief on the coast of Coromandel, at that time occupying, temporarily, the station of Governor of Fort St. George. His doubts respecting the authenticity of the document were declared; but General Harris was commanded "to consider without delay the means of assembling the army on the coast of Coromandel, if necessity should unfortunately require such a precaution."

On the 18th of June a letter was received, written by the Earl of Macartney at the Cape of Good Hope, for the purpose of conveying to the Indian government intelligence, that such a proclamation had in fact been issued at the Isle of France. And about the same time several persons arrived at Calcutta, who had been present on the island, when

the incident occurred. "A strict examination" of those, whom the Governor-General calls "the most respectable of those persons," was performed. If their information was to be relied upon, it appeared that toward the close of the month of January, 1798, two persons arrived at the Isle of France, by a ship from Mangalore; that they were received with great demonstrations of respect, treated as ambassadors from Tippoo, and, during their stay on the island, entertained at the public expense; that, without any previous rumour or notion on the island that aid was about to be given to that prince, or a war about to commence between him and the English, the proclamation in question, two days after their arrival, was fixed up, and circulated; that the persons, thus treated as ambassadors, were so far from disowning the publication, that they ostentatiously held the same language, saw it publicly distributed by their agents at the place of their residence, and made promises in the name of the Sultaun, according to its terms; and that on the 7th of March they embarked on board the French frigate La Preneuse, accompanied by the men on whom the inducements held out by them had prevailed, to the amount of about two hundred, including some officers.[1] From other sources the

[1] This is the account which is given in the Governor-General's Letter to the Court of Directors, dated 20th March, 1799. In his minute, in the secret department, 12th of August, 1798, the following is the account. "The ambassadors aided and assisted in the levy of 150 officers and privates, for the service of Tippoo, under the terms, and for the purposes, stated in the proclamation. Few of the officers are of any experience, and the privates are the refuse of the democratic rabble of the island. Some of them are volunteers; others were taken from the prisons, and compelled to embark. Several of them are Caffrees, and people of half caste. With

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1798.

Governor-General was informed, that the French frigate arrived at Mangalore on the 26th of April; that both the Frenchmen and the persons by whom they had been brought, were received with great marks of satisfaction by the Sultan, and that the principal part of the Frenchmen were admitted into his service.

That the Governor-General should have regarded these incidents as tokens of the hostile mind of Tippoo, was natural. The only material question relates to the nature of the impression on the mind of a wise man, which that inference was calculated to produce. That the mind of Tippoo, in regard to the English, was full of hatred, and the spirit of revenge, it needed no new incident to disclose, or to confirm. In fact, the peace of Seringapatam was concluded with him, under a perfect conviction that his mind was breathing all the rage of disappointed ambition and humiliated pride; and if the hostility of his sentiments had constituted a reason for war, in the opinion of the persons in India and Europe, who at that time composed the compound government of India, that peace would never have been made, as it was made, abroad; nor applauded, as it was applauded, at home. The basis on which the wisdom of that agreement rested was the supposed soundness of the conclusion, that the power of Tippoo, far from able to resist the British when entire, was so little formidable when diminished to

such of these troops as were volunteers, the ambassadors entered into several stipulations and engagements, in the name of Tippoo." In Tippoo's own letter to the French Directory, under date the 30th of August, 1798, he says he received only sixty soldiers.

one half, that the hostility of his sentiments, however intense, and however certainly known, was a matter unworthy of particular regard, on the part of a people who declared all increase of territory unfavourable to their interests, and who, in the opposition of interest between Tippoo and the Mahrattas, could not fail to behold a security against the most formidable of the enemies whom India could raise them up.

The impression made upon the mind of the Governor-General, by the incidents of which the above is the account, appears to have been strong and agitating in the highest degree. "Under all these circumstances, an immediate attack," says he, "upon Tippoo Sultan, for the purpose of frustrating the execution of his unprovoked and unwarrantable projects of ambition and revenge, appeared to me to be demanded by the soundest maxims both of justice and policy.—Such was the tenor of my opinions as early as the 20th of June, 1798;" that is, only two days after any authentic information of the facts had been received. "I therefore," continues he, "recorded my decided judgment, that it was necessary to assemble the armies on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar without delay, and I issued my final orders for this purpose on that day. I have no hesitation in declaring, that my original intention was—if circumstances would have admitted—to have attacked the Sultan instantly, and on both sides of his dominions, for the purpose of defeating his hostile preparations, and of anticipating their declared object. I was concerned, however, to learn, from persons most conversant in

BOOK VI CHAP. 4.

1798.

militay details at Fort St. George, that the dispersed state of the army on the coast of Coromandel, and certain radical defects in its establishments, would render the assembling a force equal to offensive movements against Tippoo, a much more tedious and difficult operation than I had apprehended."[1]

Either the Governor-General condemned the policy of the treaty which was concluded by Lord Cornwallis, and highly applauded by the ministers, by the parliament, and by the people of England; Or, such was the change in circumstances, that the enmity of Tippoo, which was neither formidable, nor offered any reasonable prospect of being formidable, in 1792, had become intensely formidable in 1798; Or, lastly, the mind of the Governor-General was in a state of inflammation, and decided upon suggestions totally different from a cool and accurate contemplation of the circumstances of the case.

No where, in his official correspondence, as he lays down the reasons of his conduct, does he state any disapprobation of the treaty of Seringapatam.

[1] Letter from Lord Mornington to the Court of Directors, dated 20th March, 1799. Papers presented to the House of Commons relating to the late War in the East Indies with Tippoo Sultaun; ordered to be printed 26th Sept., 1799. "The necessarily dispersed state of the troops," (says Col. Beatson, View of the Origin and Conduct of the War with Tippoo Sultaun, i. 15,) "would have been of less importance but for those radical defects, which have in a certain degree at all times existed. These *proceed from a system of economy*, which precludes the expense of establishing depôts of grain in different parts of our possessions, and of maintaining a fixed establishment of draught and carriage cattle; without which no portion of the Madras army, however amply it might have been supplied with every other requisite for field operations, was in a condition to act with promptitude and effect."

It seems, therefore, a proper conclusion, that no disapprobation of it existed in his mind.

Whether, in the circumstances of Tippoo or the English, there was any thing at that time, which rendered the inimical mind of Tippoo more alarming, than at the date of the peace, is the next point of rational inquiry. The English, unless we are to suppose that the government which they had established in India was too bad to admit of progression, must have advanced in all the elements of political power. They had enjoyed uninterrupted peace; they had taken possession, almost unresisted, of both the French and Dutch settlements in India; time had been given to improve their experience, and their institutions, and to reap the greatest possible fruit from the extensive districts which the partition of one half of Tippoo's former territories had added to their dominions. On the side of Tippoo no change could possibly have taken place, except by the exertions which he might have made to improve his revenues, and his army—revenues completely exhausted, and an army conquered and reduced—out of the resources of a country desolated in every quarter, by the ravages of war; and reduced to one half of that extent, over which the English had found it so easy to prevail.

It would be ridiculous, and at the same time the deepest imputation upon the English government, to suppose, that, intrinsically, the power of the English had not risen upon that of Tippoo, and rendered its preponderance still greater, during the interval of only six years which had elapsed since the pacification of Seringapatam. If then any danger to the

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

English now accrued from Tippoo greater than the danger of 1792, it must be sought for in causes exterior to the condition and resources of the countries appertaining to each. The connexion with allies was the only circumstance from without, by which the power of either government was affected.

With respect to the English, it was indeed alleged that their allies, the Nizam and the Mahrattas, yielded a prospect rather of danger than of aid. This, however, was a circumstance which presented consequences of two different sorts. If the want of allies increased the causes of their dread of Tippoo, it rendered them less able to fight with him, and therefore increased the motives to peace. If they were perfectly able to fight with him, notwithstanding the want of allies, this very circumstance proved, that they had nothing to apprehend from remaining at peace. If it was alleged that they were able to fight now, but should not be able, after the lapse of some time, it implied that Tippoo's government was better than theirs, and would more rapidly increase his resources.

Besides; it was not true, that the English were to a considerable, if to any degree, less sure of auxiliary operations, than at the commencement, or any moment since the commencement of the peace. The Mahrattas, it was supposed, would stand aloof even if the Company were attacked. But in the first place, it was to be remembered, that as the Mahrattas dreaded nothing more than the increase of Tippoo's power, the natural conclusion was, that, if they saw the Company in any danger, they would be too

strongly impressed with a sense of interest not to offer effectual assistance, and if at present they showed indifference to the dispute, or rather a jealousy of the English, the reason was, because they saw the English not likely, by suffering at the hand of Tippoo, to make Tippoo formidably strong, but much more likely, by crushing Tippoo, to raise their own power to a great and formidable height. It was also true, that at the moment when Lord Cornwallis concluded the treaty, a knowledge of the case was all that was necessary to convince any man, that hardly any dependence could, even then, be placed on assistance from the Mahrattas, in the event of a subsequent dispute; and in fact, every circumstance, to which a hope of the co-operation of that people against the aggressions of Tippoo could be attached in 1792, existed in equal force at the present hour, and was as likely to produce the desired effect.

The only source of jealousy which regarded the Nizam, the second of the English allies, was the corps of sepoys commanded by Frenchmen. In the state of mind by which the Governor-General, and Englishmen of his intellectual and moral cast, were at that time distinguished, the very existence of a Frenchman was a cause of alarm: and a military corps, under the direction of Frenchmen, assumed the dreadful aspect of a most enormous evil. It was, at the same time, however, a circumstance perfectly known, that this evil, whatever it was, it depended upon the English themselves, by an act totally free from difficulty, completely to remove. The Nizam had already proposed to Sir John Shore the dis-

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1798. missal of the French officers in his service, and the abolition of the corps, provided the English troops in his pay were so increased, and their services so extended, as to enable them to defend him against the aggressions of the Mahrattas. The English themselves, indeed, were eager to hold forth, that the French officers, by the avidity with which they absorbed the powers of the state, had become odious to the Nizam, who was now alarmed at their daring encroachments, and eager for their destruction. In point of fact, it was found, that, as soon as the Governor-General proposed to agree to the conditions upon which the Nizam had already offered to dismiss the French, his assent was obtained, and this cause if such it is to be deemed, of seeking the destruction of Tippoo, was speedily taken away. The truth is, that the English were, in the first place, stronger, intrinsically; and, in the next place, not weaker, on any rational ground of computation, in respect of allies, in the year 1798, than in the year 1792. If there was any thing real, therefore in the ground of alarm, it is not in the circumstances of the English, but in those of Tippoo, that it is to be found.

The revenue which it was possible for the very limited territory of the Sultan to yield, and the moderate army which that revenue could maintain, it is miserable to contemplate as having been a subject of alarm, to a people, possessing the resources of the English, and so many degrees advanced beyond their opponents in the art and science of war. Of course, it is in circumstances extrinsic to his dominions, if in any, that Tippoo can be regarded as having been formidable to the English, or as laying them under any

1798.

obligation, beyond that which existed in 1792, to adopt extraordinary measures of self-defence. But of such circumstances one only can be named; and that is, his union with the French. To clear up, therefore, every difficulty in this question of policy, it only remains to inquire how much of danger was implied in the connexion which he had formed with that formidable people.

Tippoo was by no means without a connexion with the French at the date of the treaty of Seringapatam. A French corps had formed a distinguished part of his army from the moment he ascended the throne. When that treaty was concluded, a war was impending between the English and the French; and no man could have a doubt that Tippoo would gladly join the enemies of those whom he regarded as his inveterate foes, should those enemies think of carrying their arms to that distant part of the globe. With all these circumstances fully before him, Lord Cornwallis thought it wise to make peace. Had any new circumstance occurred, to make it wise in Lord Wellesley to come to the determination, which he says he had formed on the 20th of June, 1798, of attacking Tippoo immediately, if he had found it possible to assemble the troops? Two men had appeared at the Isle of France, and a proclamation had been issued by the Governor. From this, as far as then was known, only one of three inferences could rationally be drawn: Either that it set forth a number of falsehoods, for the purpose of precipitating the English into an Indian war: Or that it was the act of a madman making public a communication which it was so much the interest of both parties to

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

keep in the profoundest secrecy: Or, which was by far the most probable supposition, that it was nothing but an act of boasting, bragging, folly, with something of very small importance for its foundation. Nothing was more likely than that Tippoo, seeing the increase which had taken place in the French corps in the service of other native powers, both in that of the Nizam, and that of the principal Mahratta power, was very desirous of increasing his own; and might have sent agents to the Isle of France for the purpose of engaging both officers and men. It is well known, how much of boasting, and of exaggeration, enters into the verbal intercourse of the East; it is well known, also, that Tippoo carried this weakness to excess, and might be regarded as a braggart even among orientals. It is still further known, that on nothing was he fonder of bragging, than his power in relation to the English, and the vengeance which, if provoked by them, he should one day inflict. It was, therefore, not incredible, it was highly probable, that with a view to obtain a more favourable reception to his application for leave to enlist soldiers in the Isle of France, his agents were instructed to talk very high, to boast of his enmity to the English, and even his power, if well supported by the French, to expel them from India. Vapour of this kind was a thing too common in India to excite any particular regard. But it was not surprising, if it produced on the French Governor a very different effect. It was very well known, at the period when the Governor-General was called upon to deliberate, or to decide without deliberation, upon the question of peace or war, that a high degree

of excitability had, by the events of their revolution, been conveyed to the minds of Frenchmen; and they were almost as much disposed to the language of vanity and ostentation as the orientals themselves: and the only rational conclusion was, that the French Governor, evidently a very ignorant and foolish man, had been eager to adopt any occasion, however insignificant, of indulging his propensity for boasting, exaggeration, and display; that the loose, hyperbolical talk of Indians had been held forth as the momentous language of a solemn negotiation; and that two agents for recruiting soldiers had been transformed into ambassadors, for the purpose of contracting an alliance, offensive and defensive, between the Sultan of Mysore, and the Republic of France.

But, even should we go so far as to allow the wisdom of supposing that Tippoo had made an overture of the most serious kind for an alliance offensive and defensive against the English, an important question is still to be asked. Did this, in the smallest degree, alter the circumstances of the English in regard to Tippoo? Was their danger, in any respect, increased? Would they have been perfectly safe to remain at peace, had not this overture been made? If so, in what respect did this overture increase the probability of evil? It may be affirmed, without any dread of refutation, that it produced no effect of that description whatsoever. In reality, the incident disclosed nothing with regard to the mind of Tippoo, which was not perfectly known, believed, and acted upon before; namely, his eager desire to do mischief to

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1798.

the English, and to unite with any power that would embark in the same design, more especially with the French, whose power and hatred appeared to offer so great a resource. In fact, the incident made a disclosure, which might have been regarded as agreeable; that the connexion between Tippoo and the French was so trifling, and their mode of intercourse so very childish and absurd. It might have been expected, and it ought to have been beforehand supposed, that a perfect and regular channel of communication was opened between them and that their conjoint means of annoying the English had been well digested, and perfectly understood.

But, if this incident disclosed nothing with regard to the minds of Tippoo and the French, except that they were less capable of doing mischief to the English, than might before have been reasonably expected, it can hardly be supposed, that an overture so loose, indefinite, full of negligence and mismanagement, could add any thing to the motives of the French for carrying hostilities to India, if their circumstances admitted so costly an experiment. And, lastly, if this overture intrinsically altered nothing, either in regard to the dangers of the English, or their knowledge of that danger, except by showing that it was less than they might have supposed, was there any thing (for that is the last hypothesis) in the state and condition of the French nation, at that particular time, which rendered it more likely they should now send an army to India, than at any period since the conclusion of the treaty of Seringapatam? During the two days between

the 18th and the 20th of June, 1798, in which contracted space the Governor-General made up his mind, upon the strength of the incident in question, to attack the sovereign of Mysore instantly; it may be affirmed, that he had no rational ground for supposing it more likely that the French would then make war upon India, than it had been at any period since the war between them and England began. It evidently follows, that there was no reason for destroying Tippoo, at this particular moment, which had not existed at every moment since the commencement of the negotiation for peace.

Still, the character of the policy which was pursued by the Governor-General remains to be determined, by the solution, not of the question whether more reason, than at any preceding period, existed for the destruction of the Sultan, but of the question, whether then sufficient reason existed as well as, if such were the coincidence, at any antecedent time. More obscurity rests upon this determination. If it be true, that the Governor-General ought to have been guided by the act of parliament, made and provided for the express regulation of his conduct, the answer is not doubtful. By that act, all augmentation of territory, and every act of war against an Indian prince, except for self-defence, in the case of actual hostilities, was declared to be contrary to the interest, and injurious to the honour of the British nation. It will be impossible to show, that the war into which the Governor-General was so eager to plunge, was a war of self-defence, except by such arguments as will show, that no war which has

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

a prospect of adding to the securities of a nation can ever be a war of a different sort. If it was proper in the Governor-General to treat the act of parliament with contempt; as the parliament itself soon after declared that it was, by thanking and applauding him for his flagrant violation of that act; and if the only question was, whether or not the British interests were to be promoted, or the contrary, by the ruin of this dreaded foe, the inquiry is more complicated. What was to be gained was abundantly obvious; it was the saving of the expense, which the maintenance of a force, sufficient to guard against any chance of evil from his malignity, would have required. This expense, if the war by good fortune had not been so very short, would not perhaps have equalled the interest of the money expended by the war. Had this been the fact, more would have been lost, it is evident, than gained, by the destruction of Tippoo; for as to the mere increase of dominion, independent of security, that, in the shape of a good, was not less violently renounced by Lord Mornington, than by the parliament, and by the nation at large. It was on this foundation, or otherwise it will be difficult to find one, on which, after conquering the dominions of Tippoo, instead of keeping the whole for the benefit of his country, he gave to others an important part, and even urged upon the Mahrattas a portion which they refused. With regard to what was lost to the British interests by the destruction of Tippoo (for even the power of Tippoo was an evil not without its good), it is much less easy to form any thing like a determinate opinion. While Tippoo existed, the Mahrattas might

be confidently expected to be much more subservient to the English, on whom alone they depended for assistance against this their greatly dreaded foe, than they were likely to be after his destruction, when every source of apprehension was taken away. What amount of evil might be involved in thus relieving the Mahrattas from all dependence upon the English, cannot, of course, be exactly defined. The English were able to chastise them when they thought chastisement requisite. A case might even be supposed, in which Tippoo, instead of being an opponent, might have been a confederate of the Mahrattas against the English. This supposition, however, is obviously confined to one case, that in which the English, renouncing their pacific policy, should bring the Mahrattas into a greater dread of unprovoked evil from the English, than they lay under in regard to Tippoo. As affairs were actually situated, the effects of their emancipation from the dread of Tippoo soon began to appear; and the Governor-General found himself under the supposed necessity of checking their audacity by a war.

That the contemplation of the facts made, on other occasions, an impression, correspondent to the inferences which have here been drawn: made such an impression, at the time, on the minds of the most instructed men in India, there is a remarkable document to show. On the 24th of July, 1798, a meeting was held of the British inhabitants of Calcutta, on the subject of the voluntary contributions in support of the war against the French, contributions promoted with great zeal, by all expectants

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1798.

and dependants on government, in every part of the British dominions. To this meeting great importance was attached; and all the persons highest in their consequence, and warmest in their aspirings, were forward, by the exhibition of their persons, and of their fervour, not to omit so easy an opportunity of establishing a new title of merit in the eyes of their superiors. In this splendid and numerous assembly, the Advocate-General, Mr. Burroughs, made the introductory address, at great length, and with the best of his eloquence. He introduced in it the following observations, which constitute an article of evidence, of some weight, in determining the questions which arise out of the circumstances of that important era. "Every man," he said, "at all acquainted with our situation, must know that in India we never before were so powerful and so unassailable, as at the present moment. We have an army infinitely stronger, in number and discipline, than we ever had before in India. We are without an enemy who can venture to attack us; and he would assert that there was not a single native who would now even wish to attack us, unless, indeed, our old enemy Tippoo might have such a wish.[1]

[1] If any doubts could have been entertained of the implacable hostility of Tippoo, and his purposes to assail the English, whenever what he regarded as a favourable moment should occur, they were dissipated by the mission to the Mauritius, and the proclamation of the French Governor, which however absurd and premature, was authentic evidence of the Sultan's feelings and designs. It would have been strange policy to have waited for the accomplishment of the latter; to have repeated the imbecility of the Madras government in the war with Hyder, and suffered Tippoo to devastate the Carnatic before a force could be organized to oppose him. Perpetual preparation for actual hostilities is a more expensive and anxious state than that of warfare. Active operations once com-

But that Prince had received such a lesson in the last Mysore war, as must deter him from any such enterprise again, even if he could have the aid of France in doing so. Any aid from Europe it was impossible he could have, considering the total want of ships in France, on which troops could be transmitted; and we know besides, that the English fleets maintained the entire dominion of the seas,

menced must have a termination. Arming against their probability is indefinite. It is argued in the text, that hostilities were inexpedient because Tippoo was weak. Was the British government then to wait till he should be strong; till the negotiations which he was publicly carrying on with France should have brought him the effective co-operation of the organized army of Raymond, or succours from France. The former would have been easy—the latter more practicable than the politicians of Calcutta imagined. The same chances that landed a large army in Egypt at this very period, in spite of the superiority and vigilance of our fleets, might have operated in sending to the Sultan a body of officers and men, by whose aid his resources would have been made powerfully to contribute to the annoyance and perils of our Indian empire. The co-operation of France, to an extent far beyond a handful of soldiers from the Isle of France, was held out to the Sultan, and formed part of the plan which led to the invasion of Egypt. A letter from Buonaparte, to Tippoo, was well calculated to encourage him and to alarm the Government of India. There was also ground for apprehension in the threatening attitude of Zemaun Shah on the north-west of India; and, although the event was not a reasonable subject of doubt, yet hostilities were unavoidable, and they were prudently as well as boldly anticipated by the promptitude and determination of the Governor-General. The line of conduct which he adopted concurred entirely with that enjoined by the authorities in England, as soon as the information of Tippoo's proceedings reached them. A letter from the Secret Committee, of the 18th June, 1798, instructs the Governor-General, that if he should judge that Tippoo's designs are such as the French proclamation represents, and that he is making preparations to act hostilely, it will be advisable not to wait for such an attack, but to take the most immediate and decisive measures to carry the war into the enemy's country. The circumstances described in the text prevented the previous fulfilment of their instructions, but there can be no doubt that when hostilities are, as they were in this instance, sooner or later unavoidable, sound policy, as well as common sense, prescribes that no time shall be granted to an enemy to render himself formidable. See the Wellesley Despatches, vol. i. p. 63, 83, 91, 295. App. 686.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

and that our enemies were every day lamenting their inability to send one sail in safety from any of their ports, as they were all blocked up by the British navy. The French islands in India had thrown off all connexion with France, and, instead of taking any part against us, must now look to us as friends, to protect them from any attempts which might be made on them by France."[1]

Compelled reluctantly to abandon the design of immediately invading Mysore, the Governor-General, nevertheless, renewed his orders for assembling the army with the smallest possible delay. In the policy of this measure the Madras council by no means concurred. Besides the length of time necessary for assembling the army, the expense, they said, would be so enormous; and so much danger would be unavoidably created of provoking hostilities with Tippoo, by vast preparations importing the design of war; that they could not think themselves justified, without a strong representation, in obeying the orders which they had received.[2] "Not discouraged," says the Governor-General, "by these suggestions and representations, I insisted on the immediate execution of my orders."[3]

[1] See a Report of the business of this meeting: Asiatic Annual Register, vol. i. Chronicle, p. 31.

[2] A review of the late War in Mysore, in a Letter from an officer in India. Published by M. Wood, Esq. M. P. Colonel, and late Chief Engineer, Bengal, p. 10. The Governor-General's Letter, ut supra, parag. 38.

[3] Ibid. Colonel Beatson says (Views of the Origin and Conduct of the War with Tippoo, i. 4). "The apprehensions entertained from the designs of Tippoo Sultan were certainly, at that period, considerably increased by the bold and decided measures of preparation and defence, which the Marquis Wellesley judged proper to adopt, a very few weeks after he had taken charge of the supreme government of India."

1798.

During the interval which was required for assembling the army, the Governor-General found employment in negotiating with Nizam Ali the dismission of the French officers, and the dissolution of their corps. His minister, to whom the business of the state was almost wholly committed, was a partisan of the English, and well disposed for the annihilation of the French party; as soon as the British government would consent to replace them by a force adequate to the service which the French performed in the protection of the country. The Nizam was not altogether blind to the dangers of placing himself in a state of helpless dependence upon a superior power: but, totally unequal, as he knew that he was, to the defence of himself, against the Mahrattas, against the Sultan, or against the English, it was easy for the minister to convince him, that he was safer in the hands of the English than of either of the other two. From the attainment of what he regarded as an object of unspeakable importance, the dissolution of a French corps in the service of the Nizam, Lord Mornington was far from allowing himself to be restrained by any dread of offending the Mahrattas; the motive by which the mind of his predecessor had been swayed. His instructions were issued to the acting Resident at Hyderabad, on the 8th of July, to open a negotiation with the Nizam: and, on the 1st of September, a treaty was concluded, by which four battalions of British troops were added to the former two, and the British government was pledged for the protection of the Nizam against any unjust demands of the Mahrattas. The Nizam, on his part, engaged

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

to disband the French corps in his service; to deliver over its officers to the British government, whenever the whole of the British force should arrive in his capital; and to raise the subsidy, which he paid for the maintenance of the British troops, from 57,713, to 2,01,425 rupees per month.

Though the force which the French officers commanded consisted, after all the alarm which it occasioned, of less than 14,000 men, it was necessary to take precautions against the chance of their resistance. Pending the negotiation, the additional troops destined for the service of the Nizam were collected in that part of the Company's territory which touched upon his frontier; and, on the 10th of October, joined the two former battalions at Hyderabad. Fortunately for the schemes of the Governor-General, Raymond, whose talents and great influence might have been formidably exerted for the preservation of his power, had died a few months before; and a struggle for ascendency had introduced great animosity and disunion into the corps. Not only the Nizam, but even the minister himself, wavered, however, and drew back, when the enterprise came to the verge of execution. In so little respect was this greatly dreaded corps really held by the British officer, who commanded the six subsidiary battalions, that he did not hesitate to take a decisive step. He declared his determination, unless the Nizam came to the immediate resolution of fulfilling his engagements, to make an attack on the French camp with his own forces, and proclaim the want of faith in the Nizam's government as the cause of all the consequences which might ensue. A proclamation

1798.

was soon after sent to the French camp, announcing the discharge of the officers, and declaring it treason in the soldiers to obey them. The soldiers were already in a state approaching to mutiny. The disorders now proceeded to greater violence; and the officers were imprisoned by their men. In this helpless situation, the camp, which at the time did not contain above 11,000 men, the rest of the corps being on a distant detachment, was surrounded by the whole of the British battalions, and a strong body of the Nizam's horse. The men, upon a promise of their pay, and continuance of service, laid down their arms; and the arrest of the officers was accomplished without difficulty or danger. Notwithstanding the unfriendly passions which Frenchmen at this moment excited in the breast of the Governor-General, he was careful to ensure to the individuals, who had fallen into his power, that generosity of treatment which a gallant mind is ever prompted to bestow. Their property, together with such arrears as were due to them by the Nizam, were secured to their use; they were conveyed to Calcutta, under every indulgence compatible with the security of their persons; and on their arrival in England, the Governor-General provided that they should not be treated as prisoners of war, but transported to their country without detention.[1]

[1] Letter of the Governor-General to the Court of Directors, dated 21st Nov. 1798. Printed papers, ut supra, p. 6. Malcolm's Sketch, p. 236—244. Beatson tells us (i. 50) that the secret was well kept; that the cause of sending the detachment from Guntoor to Hyderabad was not made known to the government of Madras; and that the intelligence of the annihilation of the French corps came by surprise upon the English of Cal-

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

The chances of good or evil from the Mahrattas, also, forced themselves upon the attention of the British government; and negotiations were carried on at Poonah, at the same time with those, which, at Hyderabad, were conducted to an issue deemed so exceedingly favourable. The negotiations, however, attempted with the Mahrattas, produced not equal results. The substance of the treaty negotiated at Hyderabad was communicated to the Peshwa, both before and after its conclusion. "And at both periods," says the Governor-General to the Court of Directors, "he expressed his entire approbation of the nature and tendency of the new engagements, as well in their operation upon the interests of the Mahratta empire, as upon those of the Nizam."[1] On the other hand, Sir John Malcolm says, "The measures taken at Hyderabad were regularly communicated to the Peshwa: but that prince, either influenced by his weak councillors, or acting under the control of Dowlut Rao Sindiah, obstinately continued to withhold his formal consent to any acknowledgment of the right of the British govern-

cutta and Madras. He tells us also, that their minds were in such a state as to regard the transaction as a perfect master-piece of policy.—M. The secret was well kept, but it is not correct to say that it was not communicated to the Government of Madras, of which General Harris was temporarily the head. The intention was made known to him by a despatch in the secret department in July. Wellesley Despatches, i. 132. Nor is it true that it was not known to any but the Government, for Munro, in a letter dated Sept., 1798, says, "The Nizam has, either of himself, or by the interference of the supreme government, conceived the design of breaking them (Raymond's force) altogether, or, at least, of disbanding all the corps that are suspected of being under French influence. A strong detachment has been formed at Guntoor to march in case of necessity to Hyderabad. The sooner they move, the better; for no time ought to be lost in destroying this party, so hostile to our interests in the Deccan. Life i. 202.—W.

[1] Letter, ut supra, parag. 24.

ment to arbitrate in his disputes with the court of Hyderabad."[1] Of course, it may be said, the Governor-General knew best. It may also, however, with equal certainty be said, that he had the greatest temptation to lay on a colour; that if none except agreeable consequences were supposed to flow from his measures, the favour of his employers would be enhanced; that from this species of art, which had been amply practised by his predecessors, Lord Mornington must have been a man far superior to his predecessors to stand always exempt; and that of those expedients for a colour, the two letters which have just been quoted appear to present us with instances. In the first place, when mention is made of the time which would be required for assembling the army of the Carnatic, no mention whatsoever is made of the disapprobation expressed by the Madras council. In the next place, when the execution is described of the measures taken for the destruction of the French corps, in the service of the Nizam, the reluctance exhibited by the Nizam, when the crisis arrived, is not only covered with silence, but with a language which implies uninterrupted alacrity and zeal. Beside the difficulty, in such a situation as that of Sir John Malcolm, of remaining long ignorant of such a general and important fact, the consequences also tally with his representation; for all the efforts of the Governor-General to draw the Mahrattas into an intimate connexion with him, totally failed. And again; as Sindia, not the Peshwa, was at this time

[1] Malcolm's Sketch, p. 244.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

predominant over the Mahratta councils, the assent of the Peshwa had little value; and if presented to people ignorant of the state of the facts, as equivalent to that of the Mahratta power, was only calculated to produce deception. It seems to be affirmed, from private information, by Colonel Wilks, that both Sindia and the Peshwa, under alarm at the symptoms of ambition which at this moment distinguished the movements of the British power, were actuated by favourable dispositions towards the sovereign of Mysore; but Sindia was afraid to take a positive step, on account of his dominions in the North, which the English had an army ready to invade; and the Peshwa, beside the imminent danger to which the hostility of the English would expose him, had no liberty to act but as Sindia directed. The Governor-General, accordingly, when at last he found that assistance from the Mahrattas was not to be obtained, encouraged by the probability that he would receive no opposition, resolved to proceed in his warlike operations without them.[1]

[1] Hist. Sketches, iii. 361—366.—M. We have now before us the whole of the instructions addressed by Lord Mornington to Col. Palmer, the Resident at Poonah, and are able to see how much of the statements on which the reflections in the text are founded, are accurate. The former are incorrect, the latter, cousequently, are inapplicable. The reduction of the French brigade was communicated to the court of Poonah only when it had actually taken place. Despatches, i. 112. The consent of the Peshwa to the measure was never asked, and could not therefore be withheld. What was proposed and not acceded to was, the establishment of a subsidiary force at Poonah. Beside the jealousy awakened by this proposition, the Peshwa was alarmed at the apparent intention of the British Government to compel the restoration of Nana Furnavese to his ministerial functions. Despatches, i. 118, 123, 252, &c. Although he shortly afterwards became reconciled to him. So Capt. Grant observes; "The sudden desire now evinced by the English to grant

On the 18th of June, the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors wrote from England to the Governor-General in Council, that they had just received from his Majesty's ministers, information of a large armament which had sailed from Toulon on the 19th of the preceding month; and that amid the various conjectures respecting its destination, it was not conceived impossible that India might be the object of attack, by way of the Red Sea, or its coast, after conquest of Egypt; "or even," the Directors add, "by the Black Sea, or by Bussora. His Majesty's ministers," they continue, "have therefore informed us, that immediate measures will be taken for a considerable augmentation of the European force in the East Indies: you may expect that not less than 4000 seasoned and disciplined troops, and perhaps a larger number, may be sent to the Company's settlements with all possible expedition, part of which will, we trust, reach India not many months after the receipt of this despatch."[1]

It was not before the 18th of October that the Governor-General first received authentic intelligence of the expedition from Toulon, and the invasion of Egypt; when his preparations against Tippoo were

him a subsidiary force, (which he had before applied for in vain); their frequent recommendations to reinstate Nana Furnavese in the ministry, and to remove Sindia from Poonah, led Bajee Rao, whose views and information were bounded by narrow limits, to suppose that the whole was a scheme of the detested Nana, the object most dreaded, and therefore uppermost in his mind. Mahr. Hist. iii. 169. And, although he ultimately was bribed by Tippoo, and persuaded by Sindia to withhold his assistance, yet at this time he pledged himself faithfully to execute the conditions of subsisting engagements, and, on the prospect of a war with Tippoo, promised to afford him his aid. Ibid. 173.—W.

[1] Printed Papers, ut supra, No. 1.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

approaching maturity. The constituted authorities in England, under impression of the danger which the invasion of India by so great an army would produce, gave directions to the Governor-General, to make war upon Tippoo, if he appeared to be actually accumulating the means of seconding invasion by the French. They seem not to have regarded the proclamation at the Mauritius as satisfactory evidence of any such design; of which they express themselves in the following words: "We are unable to judge, whether this proclamation be in reality what its import declares to be; or intended merely as a feint, with a view to embroil us with Tippoo." And they marked out unambiguous preparations for war, as the circumstance by which the judgment of their subordinates in India ought to be determined. "It is highly improbable," they say, "that Tippoo should have entered into any league with the French, without some apparent preparation, on his part, of an hostile nature, in furtherance of their designs. If such shall have been the case, it would be neither prudent nor politic to wait for actual hostilities on his part." Preparation for war, in the only sense which can here be applied, is such an augmentation, or such a disposition, of the instruments of war, as, to some considerable degree, is both unusual, and increases the danger of the suspecting state. That any such augmentation or disposition of the instruments of war had taken place on the part of Tippoo, no evidence was ever produced; while evidence to the contrary appears in abundance.[1] Even with the permission which the

[1] "It was supposed," (says Colonel Beatson, p. 57) "that Tippoo

alarm of the French expedition extorted from the Directors, they thought proper to enjoin that in resorting to hostilities, "the utmost discretion" should be used; "that we may not," they say, "be involved in a war in India, without the most inevitable necessity."—That inevitable necessity existed, or any necessity at all, will not easily, after the first impartial exposition of the facts, be again alleged. The war might be advantageous, or it might be not advantageous. But the word must be used in an extraordinary sense, if it ever be denominated necessary.

On the last day of October, that is, in less than a fortnight after he was informed of the invasion of Egypt, the Governor-General received intelligence of the destruction of the French fleet by Sir Horatio Nelson, at the mouth of the Nile. Notwithstanding this decisive event; "I did not," he says, "relax

Sultaun's army had suffered essentially, both in numbers and discipliuc, since the last war: his finances were in disorder: his councils were perplcxed by discordant opinions; aud his spirits dejected and broken by the disappointment of his hopes of Freuch assistauce; by the retreat of Zemaun Shah; by thc failure of his intrigues at the courts of Poonah and Hyderabah; and by the unexampled vigour, alacrity, and extent of our military preparations." "Tippoo Sultau's field army" (he says p. 204) "was estimated at 47,470 fighting men."—M. Col. Beatson argues only upon "supposition," but, notwithstanding the assertion of the text, there is specific evidence that the forces of Tippoo had been augmeuted, and were in such a position as rendered them capable of being directed at once to military aggression. The Sultan's whole force amounted to between 70 and 80,000 men; of these, about 30,000 were in Seringapatam, and its immediate environs; the whole were in a state of activity and efficiency, provided with guns, and baggage, and carriage cattle. Tippoo was, no doubt, induced to hesitate, by his disappointment as to the succour he expected from the French, but his intrigues at Poonah did uot fail, and this was some consolation. See Abstract of the Present State of Tippoo Sultan, by Capt. Malcolm, Wellcsley Despatchcs, Appen. 651; also a paper of intclligence from Lord Clive, p. 361.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1798.

any part of the naval or military preparations which had been commenced under my orders;—being still uncertain of the fate of the French army in Egypt, and ignorant whether an additional force might not have been intended to co-operate with it in India, by the ordinary passage round the Cape of Good Hope."[1] The chance of the invasion of India, from either quarter, will not at the present moment be regarded as having been very great. It will not come up to the description of what constituted an "inevitable necessity" for going to war with Tippoo.

"The immaturity, however," says Sir John Malcolm, "of the Sultan's plans, formed, in Lord Wellesley's opinion, the strongest reason for an immediate attack upon his possessions; but the delay, which was likely to occur in assembling the army on the coast of Coromandel, which had been reduced to a very low establishment, and was in a very divided and unequipped state, obliged him to alter it; and he made no communication whatever to Tippoo Sultaun on the subject of his proceedings, till the military preparations, both at Madras and Bombay, were complete; and the alliance with the Nizam had not merely been restored, but rendered so efficient, as to secure the full application of the resources of that Prince in aid of the common cause."[2]

During all the time of these remarkable proceedings, it is singular that Tippoo was either without the means, or without the inclination, of making

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, No. 8.
[2] Malcolm's Sketch, p. 254.

any considerable addition to his habitual state of equipment for war, and, with an appearance of insensibility to all that surrounded him, forbore even to remonstrate against the accumulation which was going forward of the instruments of his destruction.[1] When the beginning of November arrived, the Governor-General thought the opportunity was now favourable to exhibit his complaints. On the 8th of that month, he addressed a letter to the Sultan, in which the expressions were conciliatory, rather than hostile, but in which he informs him of the connexion which he was aware had been formed between him and the French, "Whom you know," says he, "to be the inveterate enemies of the Company, and to be now engaged in an unjust war with the British nation." He then gives him a lecture, on French principles; which will be appealed to hereafter as a monument of the times. "It appears not," he adds, "either necessary or proper, that I should any longer conceal from you the surprise and concern with which I perceived you disposed to involve yourself in all the ruinous consequences of a connexion, which threatens, not only to subvert the foundations of friendship between you and the Company, but to introduce, into the heart of your kingdom, the principles of anarchy and confusion; to shake your own authority; and to destroy the religion which you revere." On the disposition

[1] The inertness of Tippoo, as has been shown in the last note, is an unfounded assertion. He was actively strengthening himself, both in his military arrangements, and by negotiation with the Mahrattas. The preparations against him, confined to the re-organization of the Madras army, were not of a nature to inspire any particular alarm, or to call for remonstrance; they were entirely defensive.—W.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 8.

1798.

of the Company to preserve inviolate the obligations imposed by the relation of amity and peace, the Governor-General cited the remarkable instance which had recently occurred; of a district of country to which, though possessed by the Company, the Sultan laid claim, and of which, his right having been ascertained by arbiters mutually chosen, restitution had been made. As the result of these premises, the Governor-General proposed to send to him a British officer, whom he already knew, to communicate to him, on the part of the English, and of the Peshwa and Nizam, their allies, the plan which in their opinion was calculated "to remove all existing distrust and suspicion, and to establish peace and good understanding on the most durable foundations."[1]

Of the terms which, at different periods, the Governor-General was disposed to allow Tippoo Sultaun, he himself has given a very instructive history, in his letter to the Court of Directors, under date the 3rd of August, 1799.[2] What was the extent of his views in relation to the attack which he was so eager to make, immediately after he first received intelligence of the foolish proclamation at the Isle of France, he has no where disclosed.[3]

[1] Letter from Lord Mornington to Tippoo Sultan, printed papers, ut supra, p. 24.—M. Despatches, i. 326.—W.

[2] See the papers relating to East India Affairs, printed by order of the House of Commons in the year 1800.

[3] Non-acquaintance with documents is not equivalent to non-existence. Lord Mornington's views, in his proposed plan of immediate attack, were detailed by him to the authorities in England. His main object was to compel Tippoo to cede his territories in Malabar, so as to cut off his communication with the sea-coast and the French; to exact from him indemnification for the expenses of the armament, and to insist upon his receiving

When he found the execution of this design impossible, and how much time it would require to put the army in a condition for action, he would, he says, have been "contented with any adjustment which offered a reasonable prospect of detaching Tippoo from his connexion with the French;" and that, "in the arrangement which then occurred to him, his views were limited to the establishment of permanent Residents, on the part of the Company, and of the allies, at Seringapatam, to the dismission of all the French then in the Sultaun's service, and to the perpetual exclusion of the French from his armies and dominions."

Before preferring these demands, he first, however, deemed it politic, to place the armies in a posture for action; and to take measures for lessening the chances of evil, as well as improving the chances of good, at the hands of the Nizam and the Mahrattas. The month of November had thus arrived before he was ready to make his first communication. But, at that time the French had invaded Egypt, which appeared to increase the dangers of the English dominion in India; on the other hand, the military preparations of the English were advancing to maturity on a great scale, the French party at Hyderabad was destroyed, the resources of the Nizam's country were by the late arrangement placed at the disposal of the Company's servants, and the English now had power to enforce whatever

an English Resident at his capital. Letter to Dundas. Despatches, i. 82. To these terms he still adhered when the prospect of hostilities became more imminent, as is noticed in the text, and it is justly admitted that they were not extravagant.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

demands they might think proper to advance. The Governor-General, therefore, resolved not to content himself with the terms which, without having communicated them, he would have thought sufficient for all necessary purposes before. If, however, the real ground of the war was not the love of conquest, which was so fervently disclaimed, but the chance of danger from the power of Tippoo, as was the grand pretence, the new degree of security which had accrued to the Company was a reason, not for war, but peace. The additional chance of invasion, by the presence in Egypt of the French, presented, as far as it went, a demand for additional security. But that chance was to be weighed, and its value ascertained. Except to an eye surrounded by the mists of ignorance or passion, which saw its object hideously enlarged, it could not appear to be great. Besides, as the British government would not long remain without a grand effort to expel the enemy from Egypt, the Company might have quietly rested on its guard, without incurring the mischievous expenditure, not to speak of any more of the detestable consequences of actual war, at least for a little time, till they understood what was the result of the measures adopted against the invaders of Egypt, and whether a few months would not set India free from any danger on account of the French. However, the terms, beyond which the Governor-General did not think as yet of proceeding, were not extravagant. Beside the conditions first meditated, he meant to demand the cession of Canara, a maritime province on the western coast, which appeared to facilitate the communication of Tippoo with the French; but

to allow him an equivalent in some other quarter distant from the coast. This, then, in the opinion of the Governor-General, who now felt himself in a condition to enforce any demand, and whose apprehension from French invasion, and the rooted enmity of Tippoo, was then at its height, was all the security, as against Tippoo, which the British interests really required. If nothing followed to create occasion for more security, every addition which was made to the sacrifices exacted of the hated foe, was made either in the spirit of revenge, or from the love of conquest; for no other solution remains.

The Governor-General professes, and with all the marks of sincerity, his expectation to have been, that Tippoo, overawed by the discomfiture of the French fleet in Egypt, by the ascendency of the English at Hyderabad, the strength of the English army, and an English fleet on the coast of Malabar, would accede to the terms which he meant to propose, and that the calamities of war might still be avoided. For the purpose of accelerating measures, whether of a pacific or hostile description, he thought it expedient to be near the scene, and in a letter dated the 10th of December acquainted the Sultan with his intention of repairing shortly to Madras. He arrived on the 31st of the same month, and found waiting for him an answer from Tippoo.

In the letter of the Sultan, the expressions were not less pacific than those of the Governor-General. He declares the highest satisfaction at the naval victory gained on the coast of Egypt by the English

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

over the French; the former of whom he describes as possessing almost every virtue, the latter every vice. The charge which had been urged by the Governor-General, of soliciting an hostile connexion with the French, he endeavours to answer thus; "In this Sircar (state) there is a mercantile tribe, who employ themselves in trading by sea and land. Their agents purchased a two-masted vessel, and having loaded her with rice, departed with a view to traffic. It happened that she went to the Mauritius, from whence forty persons, French, and of a dark colour, of whom ten or twelve were artificers, and the rest servants, came here in search of employment. Such as chose to take service were entertained, and the remainder departed beyond the confines of this Sircar: And the French, who are full of vice and deceit, have perhaps taken advantage of the departure of the ship to put about reports with the view to ruffle the minds of both Sircars." He then made protestation of his earnest desire to preserve and to strengthen the bands of peace between himself and the Company; described his own occupations as all in the highest degree pacific; and added, "In this case, the allusion to war in your friendly letter, and the following passage, namely, *that prudence required that both the Company and their allies should adopt certain measures of precaution and self-defence*, have given me the greatest surprise." As the proposition of sending to him a deputy, and opening a negotiation, appeared to imply, that new sacrifices were to be exacted of him, he appealed to the existing treaty, as affording the proper and adequate adjustment of the rights and interests of the contracting parties;

and said, "I cannot imagine that means more effectual than these can be adopted, for giving stability to the foundations of friendship and harmony, promoting the security of states, or the welfare and advantage of all parties."[1] This letter the Governor-General regarded as marked by prevarication and falsehood, in respect to his intercourse with the French; and by criminal evasion, in regard to the moderate and amicable proposition for opening a negotiation. He replied, accordingly, by a letter, dated the 9th of January, 1799, in which he described the embassy to the Isle of France; and explicitly declared, that the new engagements into which he affirmed that Tippoo had thus entered with the enemies of the allies required a new arrangement for their security. He recommended that only one day should be taken to reply to this letter; intimating that dangerous consequences might result from a greater delay.[2] That time might not be wanting for the campaign before the commencement of the rains, was the motive which impelled the Governor-General to hasten; and, beside the established practice, and inveterate habits of Oriental courts, the same circumstance afforded a strong motive to the Sultan to make use of every expedient for delay.

The end of January approached, and an answer from the Sultan had not yet arrived. This was interpreted contempt and obstinacy. It is even

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, No. 8, inclosure, No. 4.

[2] Ibid. No. 5.—M. Despatches, i. 394. It is essential to remark that the only topic on which an immediate reply is insisted on is Tippoo's consent to receive the English envoy.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

assigned as proof of more determined enmity than was previously supposed. The army was now irresistible. "On these grounds," says the Governor-General, "towards the close of the month of January, 1799, my intention was to have required from Tippoo Sultaun, in addition to the terms already stated, the payment of a considerable sum of money, as an indemnification for the expense to which his hostile and treacherous conduct had subjected the allies.[1]

Before the 3rd of February, Lord Mornington received intelligence, that Tippoo had prepared two native vakeels, who, together with one of the French officers who had lately arrived from the Isle of France, were waiting at Tranquebar, to embark on a mission to the Executive Directory of France. This cannot be regarded as a very extraordinary proceeding in a prince who knew that a vast army had been levied against him before any complaint had been preferred, or so much as an explanation asked, of his conduct; and might by

[1] Letter from the Governor-General to the Court of Directors, dated 3rd August, 1799, ut supra.—M. On the 16th of January a letter was addressed by Lord Mornington to Tippoo Sultan, forwarding to him one from the Emperor of Turkey, "warning the Sultan against a connexion with the French, and exhorting him to renounce all intercourse with them," offering also the mediation of the Porte in case of any disagreement between Tippoo and the English. Lord Mornington again urged upon Tippoo the reception of an ambassador "who will be empowered to conclude the definite arrangement of all differences" between the Sultan and the allies. The condition of an answer therefore, "in one day," had not been insisted on. In fact, the proposition to send an ambassador had been thrice repeated, and as no answer had arrived by the 3rd of February, the objects of the Sultan could not be misunderstood. It was expressly in anticipation of this policy, and with a view to defeat it, that the Governor-General directed the first movements to be made. Despatches, i. 426.—W.

himself have been represented, with surely not less plausibility than, by the English, their preparations for attack, as a proceeding purely defensive, and imperiously called for by the dangers with which he was conspicuously threatened.[1] At this time, however, the Governor-General determined to suspend all negotiation, until the united forces of the Company and their allies should, to use his own expressions, "have made such an impression on the territories of Mysore, as might give full effect to our just representations." [2]

On the 3rd of February, his Lordship despatched his commands to General Harris, to enter the territory of Mysore, with the army which had been assembled at Velore, and to General Stuart to cooperate with the Bombay army from Malabar; while at the same time he gave intimation to the allied courts, and the British admiral on the coast, that he now considered the Company as at war with Tippoo Sultan.

Another addition was now made to the severity of the terms. From this time nothing less was to be exacted of the Sultan than a cession of his maritime provinces in perpetuity to the English; an equal territory on their respective frontiers to each of the allies, amounting to about the fourth part of his dominions, and a crore and a half of rupees. But, in the second place, if any decisive advantage should be obtained in the field, or the war should be advanced to the opening of the batteries upon Serin-

[1] It was at any rate a proof that he sought to repel those dangers by force, not avert them by conciliation.—W.

[2] Letter, 20th March, 1799, ut supra.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799. gapatam, the General was not to content himself with less than the cession of one whole half of the territories of which the Sultan was in possession at the commencement of the war, the relinquishment of all claim to any of the places, on the frontiers of the Company and their allies, about which there was any dispute, and the payment of two crores of sicca rupees. The dismission of all Europeans belonging to any country at war with the English, the renunciation of all connexion with the French, an engagement never to retain any individual of that nation in his service, or even to permit him to reside within his dominions, to receive at his court a permanent ambassador from each of the allies, to keep with each of them an ambassador of his own, and to give up certain forts and hostages as security for the execution of the treaty: These were articles common to this, with the former catalogue of terms.[1]

On the 13th of February, the Governor-General received a letter from Tippoo, in which, after acknowledging the receipt of his letters, he desires, as he is going upon a hunting excursion, in which he frequently indulged, that he would send the deputy (about whom his friendly pen had repeatedly written), slightly attended. This consent, which was sufficiently cold and ungracious, the Governor-General describes, as reluctant and insidious; and he answered it by referring him to General Harris, to whom all his communications were now to be addressed. This answer was even transmitted

[1] Inclosures A. and B. of the Gov.-Gen.'s Letter to the Commander-in-Chief, dated 22nd January, 1799.—M. See also Despatches, i. 454.—W.

through that General, who had orders to forward it to the Sultan on the same day on which the army should pass the frontier.

The army, now assembled at Velore, exceeded 20,000 men, whereof 2635 were cavalry, and 4381 Europeans: It was joined, before the commencement of its march, by the whole of the British detachment serving with the Nizam, 6500 strong, by about an equal number of the Nizam's infantry, including a portion of Sepoys lately commanded by the French, but now by British officers, and a large body of cavalry; " an army," than which, says the Governor-General, one " more completely appointed, more amply and liberally supplied in every department, or more perfect in its discipline, and in the acknowledged experience, ability, and zeal of its officers, never took the field in India;" The army of the western coast, equal in excellence, assembled at Cananore, under General Stuart, amounted to 6420 fighting men, of whom 1617 were Europeans: And a force, described as considerable, but of which the amount is not specified, under Colonels Read and Brown, were to join or co-operate with the commander-in-Chief from the southern districts of the Carnatic and Mysore. All this was directed against the chieftain of Mysore, who, six years before, was stripped of one half of his dominions; and left in possession of a territory yielding a revenue of little more than a crore of rupees, or one million sterling; while the revenue of the Anglo-Indian government alone, without speaking of that of its ally, exceeded nine millions. What a mass of talent the petty

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. prince of a petty country must have been supposed to possess![1]

1799. The army of Bombay, under the command of General Stuart, marched from Cananore on the 21st of February; it arrived at the head of the Poodicherrum Ghaut on the 25th of the same month; and took post at Seedapore and Seedasere, on the 2nd of March, where it both protected the large supplies which had been collected in the district of Coorg, and could readily communicate with the main army as it approached to Seringapatam. General Harris entered the Mysore territory on the 5th of March, and commenced his operations by the reduction of several forts upon the frontier; of which none made any considerable resistance; and some made no resistance at all.

At the time when the British General passed the eastern frontier of Mysore, Tippoo was supposed to be encamped in the vicinity of Madoor, and was expected to move in the direction of Bangalore, for the purpose of opposing the progress of the army. Having succeeded in raising this expectation, he left his camp near Senapatam, on the 28th of February, taking with him the principal part of his army; and on the morning of the 5th of March, a large encampment was observed by General Stuart, forming between

[1] "The victories of the Marquis Cornwallis (says Col. Beatson, i. 47) had greatly facilitated any future plan of operation against the power of Tippoo Sultaun. By diminishing *his* resources, and increasing *our own*, they had produced a twofold effect. And the extension of our frontier, by the extension of the Barramaul and Salem districts, and a thorough knowledge of the defences of Seringapatam, and of the routes leading to that city, were considered at that moment as inestimable advantages."

him and Periapatam, a town about seven miles distant from Seedasere. On the morning of the 6th, little intelligence was yet obtained of the amount of the enemy, or the meaning of their appearance; and General Hartley, the second in command, went forward to reconnoitre. From his hill of observation, at day-break, he perceived the whole of the hostile force in motion; the country, however, was covered with jungle; the atmosphere was hazy, and it was impossible to judge correctly either of their numbers or object. Between the hours of nine and ten, the enemy had penetrated with so much secrecy and expedition through the jungle, that they attacked the front and rear of the British advanced position at almost the same instant.

The nature of the country had induced General Stuart to place the army in several divisions. Three native battalions, under Colonel Montresor, were posted at Seedasere, to which another battalion was added, after the appearance of the enemy on the 5th; the main body of the army, with the park and provisions, remained at Seedapore and Ahmootenar, the first eight miles, the latter twelve, in rear of the advanced position. General Hartley remained to aid in repelling the attack. The best position of which the circumstances admitted, was assumed; and this body of Sepoys, though completely surrounded, and contending not only with a great disparity of numbers, but other unfavourable circumstances, defended themselves with such determined gallantry, that the Sultan's troops were unable to break them. The General hastened forward with the rest of the army, excepting the fourth corps, which, being posted at

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

some distance in the rear, was intercepted by a column of the enemy, and unable to join. It was not till half-past two, however, that he arrived in sight of the division of the enemy which had penetrated to the rear. It withstood and answered a brisk fire of musquetry, for about half an hour; but then fled with precipitation through the jungles, to join the rest of the army to which it belonged. The General now advanced to join Montresor and his brave companions. The men had for more than six hours been engaged with a superior enemy; were spent with fatigue; and their ammunition was almost exhausted. The advance of the troops with the General was the signal for the enemy to intermit the attack, which till this time they had upheld in front; and at twenty minutes past three they were retiring in all directions. General Stuart, apprehending a return of the enemy, which might place them in his rear, and perhaps in possession of the great magazine of rice collected by the Coorg Raja,[1] deemed it of more importance to concentrate his army at Seedapore, than to maintain the position of Seedasere, which was chiefly useful, as the only spot from which the signals, concerted between the two armies, could be observed. The killed, wounded, and missing, according to the regimental returns, in the British army, were only 143. The loss of the enemy was no doubt considerable. Tippoo remained in his camp at Periapatam till the 11th, desiring, but afraid, to strike a second blow; and arrived at

[1] The Raja accompanied General Stuart, and was present with him in the battle; which he described with vast admiration, in a letter to the Governor-General, quoted by Col. Wilks.

Seringapatam on the 14th, whence he hastened to meet the army approaching from the east.

So little, in truth, did the Governor-General respect the power of the Sultan, that the plan upon which he determined implied a confidence in the inability of that prince to offer almost any obstruction to the army which was sent to destroy him. It was planned, that it should not wait to reduce any of the intermediate forts between the frontier and the capital of the Sultan, or to form a clear line of communication, but march directly upon Seringapatam, and by a single blow terminate the contest.

The Governor-General, amid the talents for command which he possessed in a very unusual degree, displayed two qualities of primary importance: he has seldom been surpassed in the skill with which he made choice of his instruments: and having made choice of his instruments, he communicated to them, with full and unsparing hands, the powers which were necessary for the end they were employed to accomplish. General Harris was not only invested with unrestricted military powers, but was authorized to exert all the civil authority which would have belonged to the Governor-General himself, in his situation. His instructions embraced the two sets of terms, to which, in two events, the Governor-General determined, upon the march of the army, to elevate his demands. And he was further provided with a political and diplomatic commission. This was composed of the Honourable Colonel Wellesley, Lieutenant-Colonel Close, Lieutenant-Colonel Agnew, and Captain Macaulay

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

as their secretary. The commission was not entitled to act, except in obedience to the orders of the General.[1]

The army was not ready to make its first united movement on the enemy's ground before the 9th of March; within one day of the time which the Commander, in his orders to General Stuart, had described, as the latest moment at which he could with safety arrive at Seringapatam. The British army was overloaded with equipments: it carried an enormous train of battering cannon for the siege of Seringapatam; it required a prodigious mass of vehicles for the provisions and stores of a campaign to be carried on without an open line of communication; to all this was added the cumbrous baggage of the Nizam's army, a host of brinjarries, and the innumerable followers of the camp. No sufficient measures were prepared for the orderly movement of this vast, unwieldy machine. Colonel Wilks alleges that such measures were impossible. If so; either this was one of the most rash and hazardous expeditions that ever was undertaken; or the British leaders must have counted upon a wonderful inferiority, either of means or of understanding, on the part of their foe. Assuredly, had an enemy, with any thing like an adequate force, employed himself with any considerable degree of activity and skill, in making war upon the movement of this disorderly mass, which it was by no means possible to cover with the troops, it is hardly probable that he would not have retarded it, till the commencement of the

[1] For a full account of the objects of this commission. See Letter to General Harris, 22nd Feb. 1799. Dispatches, i. 442.—W.

rains; and so harassed the infantry, and worn out the cavalry, that a great portion of the baggage, stores, and ammunition would have fallen into his hands. The great thing to be dreaded, in marching at once to Seringapatam, without regard to the communication behind, was famine. This evil was all but incurred; and nearly the whole of the draught and carriage bullocks died, though the arrival of the army was probably not retarded a single day by the efforts of the enemy.

So great was the confusion, even on the first day's march, that the army halted on the 11th, to see if a remedy could in any degree be applied. It moved on the 12th, but with so little improvement, that it halted again on the 13th.

From Bangalore, within sight of which, now dismantled, the army encamped on the 14th, there were three roads by which it could march upon Seringapatam. The expectation of the enemy was, that the British would occupy and repair Bangalore, form a line of communication in the same manner as before, and advance by the middle and shortest of the roads.

The confusion of the march was so great, that the British army halted a third time on the 15th; and destroyed as much of the mass of stores as it was supposed that by any possibility the exigencies of the service would allow. On the 18th, it again halted a fourth day; and "the loss of powder, shot, and other military stores, had already been so considerable, as to excite some degree of alarm, at this early period of the campaign."[1]

[1] These are the words of two distinguished officers of the same army; Beatson, p. 65, and Wilks, iii. 407.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

Of the roads leading to Seringapatam, the southern, by Kaunkanhully, was that selected for the advance of the British army; and so well had the design been disguised, that while the forage on the expected route had been completely destroyed, it was still preserved upon this. No memorable incident occurred from the time when the army entered the Kaunkanhully route on the 16th, till it reached the tanks at Achel, between Kaunkanhully and Sultanpet. These tanks were of so much importance, that "the destruction of them," says Colonel Wilks, "in 1791, had compelled Lord Cornwallis to make the longer march, the injurious effects of which, on his exhausted cattle, were sensibly and severely felt during the remainder of the campaign." Of a similar destruction, that intelligent officer adds, "the consequences on this occasion would have been still more injurious than those experienced in 1791." It was by the merest accident, that this fatal event was prevented. A detachment sent forward on the night of the 21st, arrived not till the breaches were made in the embankment, and were just in time to save the total loss of the waters.

When the Sultan, after his return from the attack upon General Stuart, left his capital to meet the advancing army, he made his first movement on the middle road, but being soon made acquainted with its true direction, he deviated by his right to Malvilly, and encamped on the 18th, at the Madoor river, where he was joined by the two corps of his army, which had been left during his absence to hang upon the British line. "The southern road,"

says Colonel Wilks, "from this river, to the point where General Harris first entered it, presented numerous situations, where the advance of the British army might have been obstructed, and at least materially delayed, by steady troops, without any risk of disaster to themselves." What is more remarkable, Tippoo, as we are told by the same high authority, "after examining and occupying the finest imaginable position for opposing the passage of the river in front, and placing beyond it a strong corps to operate at the same time on his enemy's right flank, from very advantageous ground, with an open rear and a secure retreat from both positions, abandoned the intention of giving battle on this ground;" and determined to fight on ground, about two miles from Malvilly, which, among other advantages gratuitously bestowed on his enemy, gave them, during the intended action, the most convenient cover for their unwieldy impediments."

The slow movement of the English brought them to the Madoor river on the 24th, where they learned the particulars of the march which had been made by the Sultan upon General Stuart; and on the evening of the 27th, on approaching the intended ground of encampment to the westward of Malvilly, they espied the army of the Sultan, at a few miles' distance, drawn up on a height. As the first grand object of the General was, to carry his equipments safe to the walls of Seringapatam, he determined neither to seek nor avoid an action. The advanced piquets, however, being attacked by the enemy, and more troops being sent to their aid, a general action

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

came on. The British army under General Harris formed the right wing; the Nizam's army with the 33rd regiment, under Colonel Wellesley, formed the left. On the right wing, which had deployed into line, and begun to advance, an opening between two brigades, produced by the ground, tempted the Sultan. He advanced in person with a body of cavalry, till in the very act to charge. The effort was against the Europeans; coolly directed; and executed with so much spirit, that many of the horsemen fell on the bayonets. But it produced not so much as a momentary disorder in the ranks; and the line advancing in such a manner as to outflank the enemy's left, his guns were soon after withdrawn from the heights. The cushoons of the Sultan faced Colonel Wellesley with some steadiness, till within sixty yards, when, the 33rd regiment quickening step, they gave way; and Colonel Floyd, seizing the critical moment, charged them with his cavalry, and destroyed them to a man. The efficient state of the Sultan's equipments, and the deplorable state of the British, admitted not an idea of pursuit. The loss of the English was sixty-nine men, that of the Sultan, more than a thousand.

Immediately after this injudicious affair, the Sultan marched, with a design to place himself on the rear of General Harris, during the remainder of his march to Seringapatam. But he expected him to advance on the same road which had been taken by Lord Cornwallis in 1791. As it was anticipated, that the forage on this road would be completely destroyed, the project had for some time been contemplated of crossing the Cavery at Sosilla, about

fifteen miles east of Seringapatam, if the ford, upon examination, should appear to be practicable. The success was complete, and the battering train, with the last of the army, was over on the 30th, while the enemy was at a distance, looking for them in a different direction. This last disappointment struck a damp to the heart of the Sultan. Having received the whole of his principal officers, "We have arrived," said he, "at our last stage; what is your determination?" "To die along with you," was the unanimous reply.[1] It was the opinion of this meeting of Tippoo and his friends, that General Harris would not make his attack on the southern side of the fort, but would cross over into the island. The determination was, to meet him on his route, and find either victory or death. The Sultan and his friends took a most affecting leave, as if for the last time in this world, and all were bathed in tears. It was easy for the Sultan, whose equipments were in order, to anticipate the approach of the English. He crossed at the ford of Arakerry, and took up the intended position near the village of Chendgâl. It was not, however, the intention of the English General to cross into the island; and when, instead of pointing to the fords, he made a circuit to the left, to avoid some inconvenient marching, and reach the ground occupied by General Abercromby in 1792, the Sultan, whose dispositions were not calculated for such a movement, ventured not to make opposition; and the English army took up its ground for the siege of the capital, on the 5th

[1] Wilks, iii. 414.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

day of April, exactly one month after it passed the enemy's frontier; having advanced at the rate of not seven miles a day on enemy's ground, and not five miles a day from the commencement of its march.

A new line of intrenchments had been constructed on this side of the fort, which, reaching from the Dowlut Baug to the Periapatam bridge, and within six or seven hundred yards of the walls, avoided the fault of the redoubts in 1792, distant too far to be supported by the guns of the fort. Between these works and the river, the infantry of Tippoo was now encamped. To save the British camp from annoyance, and advance some posts, an attack was ordered the same evening under Colonels Wellesley and Shaw, on a part of the enemy, occupying a water-course in front. It failed, not without loss.[1]

[1] This affair, of no great importance at the time, has risen into some interest by circumstances said to have been connected with it, and the celebrity of the first-named of the officers employed. As stated by Col. Gurwood, it was thus: "Both divisions marched a little after sunset. The darkness of the night was very unfavourable to their advance. Col. Shawe seized a ruined village within forty yards of the aqueduct. Col. Wellesley, advancing at the same time with one wing of the 33rd regiment to attack the Tope, was, upon entering it, assailed on every side by a hot fire of musquetry and rockets. This circumstance, joined to the extreme darkness of the night, the badness of the ground, and the uncertainty of the enemy's position, were inducements to confine the operations to the object of causing a diversion to Col. Shaw's attack, and to postpone any further attempt until a more favourable opportunity should occur. Dispatches of the Duke of Wellington, i. 23. General Harris's account, from his private diary, runs thus: 6th April.—Remained under great anxiety until near twelve at night, from the fear our troops had fired on each other. Near twelve, Col. Wellesley came to my tent, in a good deal of agitation, to say that he had not carried the Tope. It proved that the 33rd, with which he attacked, got into confusion, and could not be formed, which was a great pity, as it must be particularly unpleasant to him. Life of Lord Harris, i. 295. On the following day the attack upon the Tope was renewed, under

But next morning a force was sent, which the party of the enemy could not resist; and strong advanced posts were established within 1800 yards of the fort, with their left on the river, and their right on Sultanpet.

On the 6th, General Floyd, with four regiments of cavalry, and the greater part of the left wing of the army, marched for the purpose of bringing on General Stuart; a proceeding, which the cavalry and part of the infantry of the Sultan marched at the same time to impede. The junction was made on the 14th; the active and well-conducted exertions of the Sultan's cavalry having produced no other effect than the necessity of a little more caution, and a little more time. And on the next day the Bombay army, having crossed the river to the north, occupied a ground in continuation of the line of General Harris, with a view particularly to the enfilade both of the face to be attacked, and the exterior trenches.

On the 9th, Tippoo, who had not before made any answer to the letter of the Governor-General, forwarded to him when the army crossed his frontier, sent to General Harris a letter, of which the following is a translation:

"The Governor-General, Lord Mornington, Bahauder, sent me a letter, copy of which is enclosed: you will understand it. I have adhered firmly to treaties: what then is the meaning of the advance of the English armies, and the occurrence of hostilities? Inform me.—What need I say more?"

the command of Col. Wellesley, and the post was carried in less than twenty minutes. Ibid. 297.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8

1799.

The British commander replied in the following terms:

"10*th April*, 1799.

"Your letter, enclosing copies of the Governor-General's letter, has been received. For the advance of the English and allied armies, and for the actual hostilities, I refer you to the several letters of the Governor-General, which are sufficiently explanatory on the subject."

On the 16th was made an alarming discovery. The General, in his letter to Lord Mornington, dated the 18th, says; "On measuring the bags, to ascertain what rice they really contained, they were found so much diminished by loss or fraud, that eighteen days' provision, *for the fighting men*, at *half allowance*, is all that remains in camp. Our supplies must, therefore, arrive before the 6th of May, to save us from extreme distress."[1]

On the 17th, operations of considerable importance, less difficult because simultaneous, were accomplished on both sides of the river. The enemy were dislodged from a ground commanding that which was

[1] In the Diary of General Harris the circumstances are thus recorded. "16th. I am sorry to add, that this day, on measuring our rice, to ascertain the exact quantity in store, we discovered, that from loss, or fraud, the bags were so extremely deficient, that only eighteen days' rice, at half allowance, is in camp for the fighting men. Unless Col. Reade's supplies arrive before the 6th of May, the army will be without provision. There is plenty in the Coorg country, but we have no means to convey or escort it hither; but I hope to be in Seringapatam before the end of the month. Life of Lord Harris, 315. The alarm of the General seems however to have been unnecessary. According to Munro, there was no want of grain in the camp, although the public stock was low. "The public grain of the army would only have lasted till the 7th, but a quantity sufficient to last fifteen days longer was discovered in the possession of dealers who had brought it on for sale. Life of Munro, i. 212.

intended for the approaches and batteries of General Stuart; the troops were established under a good cover within 1000 yards of the western angle of the fort; and while the enemy's attention was engaged with these operations, the bed of a water-course was seized on the southern side, which formed a parallel at an equal distance from the fort.

The state of the grain constituted now an object of the greatest solicitude, and every thing was to be done for the purpose of hastening the arrival of the two corps, which were expected to bring a supply from Coimbetore and Baramahl. To conduct them, General Floyd marched on the 19th toward the Caveriporam pass, with the whole of the regular cavalry, the whole of Nizam Ali's cavalry, and a brigade of infantry, followed by all the brinjarries, and all the superfluous followers of the camp.

The 20th produced several events. A battery opened from the northern bank on the enfilade of the south-western face, and of the enemy's intrenchment on the southern side of the river. The enemy were dislodged from a position 400 yards in advance of their general intrenchments; and a parallel was established on the spot within 780 yards of the fort. In the evening, the following letter from the Sultan was received in camp:

"In the letter of Lord Mornington, it is written, that the clearing up of matters at issue is proper, and that therefore you, having been empowered for the purpose, will appoint such persons as you judge proper for conducting a conference, and renewing the business of a treaty. You are the well-wisher of

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

both Sircars. In this matter what is your pleasure? Inform me, that a conference may take place."

1799.

On the 22nd, General Harris replied by a letter, stating, that security, not conquest, was the object of the English government, to whose pacific propositions he complained that Tippoo had hitherto refused to listen; and transmitted the draught of a preliminary treaty, drawn up according to the second and severest set of terms contained in the Governor-General's instructions.

In the situation to which affairs were now reduced, the annexation of the following severities was deemed advisable: That four of the Sultan's sons, and four of his generals, to be named by the British commander, should be given up as hostages; That acceptance of these conditions should be transmitted under his hand and seal within twenty-four hours; and the hostages, and one crore of rupees, be delivered in forty-eight: And that if these pledges were not given, the British commander would hold himself at liberty to extend his demands for security, even to the possession of the fort of Seringapatam, till the conclusion of a definitive treaty.

It was the instruction of the Governor-General, that the set of terms now put in the shape of a treaty should be sent just before the opening of the batteries upon the fort of Seringapatam. But the advanced period of the season, and the failure of provisions, when nothing but possession of the fort could, in the opinion of General Harris, justify him in delaying the siege for an instant, made him deem it hazardous to be the leader in an overture toward peace.

The sentiments to which the Governor-General was brought by the progress of events are thus described in his own words. "Towards the end of April, fresh circumstances arose which disposed me to think, that if the course of the war should favour the attempt, it would be prudent and justifiable entirely to overthrow the power of Tippoo: Accordingly, on the 23rd of April, I signified to Lieutenant-General Harris my wish, that the power and resources of Tippoo Sultan should be reduced to the lowest state, and even utterly destroyed, if the events of the war should furnish the opportunity."[1]

On the night of the 24th, the approaches to the fort were advanced 250 yards. On the 25th, a battery of four guns was erected to destroy the defences of some works which bore on the assailants; and it opened with considerable effect on the morning of the 26th. The enemy's guns were now almost wholly silenced. On the evening of the same day, the enemy's intrenchments, in advance, were attacked; and carried, after an obstinate contest, which lasted a great part of the night. This acquisition was important, because it furnished the ground on which the breaching batteries were to be erected. The British troops occupied the works on the 27th; and in the following night made their lodgment secure.

On the morning of the 28th, another letter arrived from the Sultan, intimating the magnitude of the questions to be determined, and signifying his intention to send two persons, for the immediate commencement of a conference, without which an adjustment

[1] Letter to Directors, 3rd August, 1799, ut supra.

of so much importance could not be satisfactorily performed. To this the General replied, that no modification would be made of the terms already transmitted; that ambassadors were, therefore, unnecessary, and would not be received, unless they were accompanied by the hostages and specie, already demanded; and that only till three o'clock the next day would time be allowed for an answer.

A breaching battery of six guns was erected on the night of the 28th; and on the morning of the 30th it began to fire. On the first day it demolished part of the outward wall at the west angle of the fort, and made an impression on the masonry of the bastion within it. On the second its fire was attended with increased effect. An additional battery, constructed on the night of April the 30th, opened in the morning of the 2nd of May. On the 3rd, the breach appeared to be practicable, and preparations were eagerly made for the assault. On the morning of the 4th, the troops destined for the service were placed in the trenches before day-light, that no extraordinary movement might serve to put the enemy on their guard. The heat of the day, when the people of the East, having taken their mid-day repast, give themselves up to a season of repose, and when it was expected that the troops in the fort would be least prepared to resist, was chosen for the hour of attack. Four regiments, and ten flank companies of Europeans, three corps of grenadier sepoys, and 200 of the Nizam's troops, formed the party for the assault. Colonels Sherbrooke, Dunlop, Dalrymple, Gardener, and Mignan, commanded the flank corps; and the conduct of the enterprise was intrusted to Major-General

Baird, who had solicited the dangerous service. At one o'clock the troops began to move from the trenches. The width, and rocky channel of the river, though at that time it contained but little water, its exposure to the fire of the fort, the imperfection of the breach, the strength of the place, the numbers, courage, and skill of its defenders, constituted such an accumulation of difficulties, that nothing less than unbounded confidence in the force and courage of his men could have inspired a prudent General with hopes of success. The troops descended into the bed of the river, and moved, regardless of a tremendous fire, towards the opposite bank.

From the time when General Harris sat down before the fort, the Sultan had remained on the ramparts, varying his position according to the incidents of the siege. The general charge of the angle attacked, was given to Seyed Saheb, and Seyed Goffhâr, the last, an able officer, who began his career in the English service, and was in the number of the prisoners at the disaster of Colonel Brathwaite.

The angle of the fort which the English attacked was of such a nature, that a retrenchment to cut it off might have been easily effected; and this was counselled by the most judicious of the Mysorean officers. But the mind of the Sultan, which was always defective in judgment, appears to have been prematurely weakened by the disadvantages of his situation. By the indulgence of arbitrary power, and the arts of his flatterers, his mind was brought into that situation in which it could endure to hear nothing but what gratified the will of the moment. He had accordingly estranged from his presence every

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

person of a manly character; and surrounded himself with young men and parasites, who made it their business not only to gratify his most childish inclinations, but to occupy him with a perpetual succession of wretched pursuits. He seems, therefore, when adversity came upon him, to have been rendered too effeminate, to look it steadily in the face; and, exploring firmly the nature of the danger, to employ in the best manner the means which were in his power for averting it. The flatterers were able to persuade him, partly that the fort was too strong to be taken, partly that God would protect him; and they maintained successfully that indecision which was now congenial to the relaxed habit of his mind. "He is surrounded," said Seyed Goffhâr, who was wounded early in the siege, "by boys and flatterers, who will not let him see with his own eyes. I do not wish to survive the result. I am going about in search of death, and cannot find it."

On the morning of the 4th, Seyed Goffhâr, who from the number of men in the trenches inferred the intention to assault, sent information to the Sultan. The Sultan returned for answer, that it was good to be on the alert, but assured him, as persuaded by the flatterers, that the assault would not take place till night. And in the mean time he was absorbed in religious and astrological operations; the one, to purchase the favour of heaven; the other, to ascertain its decrees. "Seyed Goffhâr," says Colonel Wilks, "having satisfied himself, by further observation, that one hour would not elapse before the assault would commence, hurried in a state of rage and despair towards the Sultan: 'I will go,' said he, 'and

drag him to the breach, and make him see by what a set of wretches he is surrounded; I will compel him to exert himself at this last moment.' He was going, and met a party of pioneers, whom he had long looked for in vain, to cut off the approach by the southern rampart. 'I must first,' said he, 'show those people the work they have to do;' and in the act of giving his instructions, was killed by a cannon-shot."[1]

The Sultan was about to begin his mid-day repast under a small tent, at his usual station, on the northern face, when the news was brought him of the death of Seyed Goffhâr, and excited strong agitation. Before the repast was finished, he heard that the assault was begun. He instantly ordered the troops which were about him, to stand to their arms, commanded the carbines to be loaded, which the servants in attendance carried for his own use, and hurried along the northern rampart to the breach.

"In less than seven minutes, from the period of issuing from the trenches, the British colours were planted on the summit of the breach." It was regulated, that as soon as the assailants surmounted the rampart, one half of them should wheel to the right, the other to the left, and that they should meet over the eastern gateway. The right. which was led by General Baird, met with little resistance, both as the enemy, lest retreat should be cut off, abandoned the cavaliers, and as the inner rampart

[1] Hist. Sketches, iii. 436, 437. For the interior history of the Mysoreans, at this time, Col. Wilks, who afterwards governed the country, enjoyed singular advantages; and we may confide in his discrimination of the sources and qualities of his information

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

of the south-western face was exposed to a perfect enfilade. The assailants on the left were opposed in a different manner. Lieutenant-Colonel Dunlop, by whom it was commanded, received a wound in the ascent; and the Sultan passed the nearest traverse, as the column quitted the breach. A succession of well-constructed traverses were most vigorously defended; and a flanking fire of musquetry, from the inner rampart, did great execution upon the assailants. All the commissioned officers, attached to the leading companies, were soon either killed or disabled; and the loss would, at any rate, have been great, had not a very critical assistance been received. When the assailants first surmounted the breach, they were not a little surprised by the sight of a deep, and, to appearance, impassable ditch between the exterior and interior lines of defence. A detachment of the 12th regiment, having discovered a narrow strip of the terre-plein, left for the passage of the workmen, got up the inner rampart of the enfiladed face, without much opposition; and, wheeling to the left, drove before them the musqueteers who were galling the assailants of the left attack, and they at last reached the flank of the traverse, which was defended by the Sultan. The two columns of the English, on the outer and inner rampart, then moved in a position to expose the successive traverses to a front and flank fire at the same time; and forced the enemy from one to another, till they perceived the British of the right attack, over the eastern gate, and ready to fall upon them in the rear; when they broke, and hastened to escape. The Sultan continued on foot during the greater

part of this time, performing the part rather of a common soldier, than a General, firing several times upon the assailants with his own hands. But a little before the time at which his troops resigned the contest, he complained of pain and weakness in one of his legs, in which he had received a severe wound when young, and ordered a horse. When abandoned by his men, instead of seeking to make his escape, which the proximity of the water-gate would have rendered easy, he made his way toward the gate into the interior fort. As he was crossing to the gate by the communication from the outer rampart, he received a musquet-ball in the right side, nearly as high as the breast, but still pressed on, till he arrived at the gate. Fugitives, from within, as well as from without, were crowding in opposite directions to this gate; and the detachment of the 12th had descended into the body of the place, for the purpose of arresting the influx of the fugitives from the outer works. The two columns of the assailants, one without the gate, and one within, were now pouring into it a destructive fire from both sides, when the Sultan arrived. Endeavouring to pass, he received another wound from the fire of the inner detachment; his horse also, being wounded, sunk under him, and his turban fell to the ground, while his friends dropped rapidly around him. His attendants placed him in his palankeen, but the place was already so crowded, and choked up with the dead and the dying, that he could not be removed. According to the statement of a servant who survived, some English soldiers, a few minutes afterwards, entered the gateway; and one of them offering to

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

pull off the sword-belt of the Sultan, which was very rich, Tippoo, who still held his sabre in his hand, made a cut at him with all his remaining strength. The man, wounded in the knee, put his firelock to his shoulder, and the Sultan, receiving the ball in his temple, expired.

The two bodies of assailants, from the right and the left had met over the Eastern gateway; and the palace was the only place within the fort not now in their possession. In this the faithful adherents of Tippoo, whose fate was yet unknown, were expected to make a desperate stand in defence of their sovereign and his family. The troops, exhausted by the heat and the toils of the day, stood in need of refreshment. In the mean time Major Allan was sent with a guard to inform the persons within the palace, that if they surrendered immediately their lives should be secured; that any resistance on the other hand would be fatal to them all. When that officer arrived at the palace, before which a part of the British troops were already drawn up, he observed several persons in the balcony, apparently in the greatest consternation. Upon communicating his message, the Kelledar, another officer of distinction, and a confidential servant, came over the terrace of the front building, and descended by an unfinished part of the wall. They exhibited great embarrassment, and a disposition to delay; upon which the British officer reminded them of their danger, and pledging himself for the protection of the inmates of the palace, desired admittance, that he might give the same assurance to the Sultan himself. They manifested strong aversion to this

proposition; but the Major insisted upon returning with them; and desiring two other officers to join him, they ascended by the broken wall, and lowered themselves down on a terrace, on which there was a number of armed men. The Major, carrying a white flag in his hand, which he had formed on the spur of the occasion by fastening a cloth to a serjeant's pike, assured them it was a pledge of security, provided no resistance was attempted: and as an additional proof of his sincerity took off his sword, which he insisted upon placing in the hands of the Kelledar. All affirmed that the family of the Sultan was in the palace, but not the Sultan himself. Their agitation and indecision were conspicuous. The Major was obliged to remind them, that the fury of the troops, by whom they were now surrounded, was with difficulty restrained; and that the consequences of delay would be fatal. The rapid movements of several persons within the palace, where many hundreds of Tippoo's troops still remained, made him begin to think the situation critical even of himself and his companions, by whom he was advised to take back his sword. As any suspicion, however, of treachery, reaching in their present state the minds of the British soldiers, would inflame them to the most desperate acts, probably the massacre of every human being within the palace walls, he had the gallantry, as well as the presence of mind to abstain from such an exhibition of distrust. In the mean time, he was entreated by the people on the terrace to hold the flag in a conspicuous manner, as well to give confidence to the people within the palace, as to prevent

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

the British troops from forcing the gates. Growing impatient of delay, the Major sent another message to the Princes. They now sent him word, that he would be received as soon as a carpet for the purpose could be procured; and in a few minutes the Kelledar returned to conduct him.

He found two of the Princes seated on the carpet, surrounded by attendants. "The recollection," says Major Allen, "of Moiz ad Dien, whom on a former occasion I had seen delivered up with his brother, hostages to Lord Cornwallis; the sad reverse of their fortune; their fear, which, notwithstanding their struggles to conceal it, was but too evident, excited the strongest emotions of compassion in my mind." He endeavoured by every mark of tenderness, and by the strongest assurances of protection and respect, to tranquillize their minds. His first object was, to discover where the Sultan was concealed. He next requested their assent to the opening of the gates. At this proposition they were alarmed. Without the authority of their father, whom they desired to consult, they were afraid to take upon themselves a decision of such unspeakable importance. The Major assured them, that he would post a guard of their own sepoys within the palace, and a guard of Europeans without; that no person should enter but by his authority; that he would return and remain with them, until General Baird should arrive; and that their own lives, as well as that of every person in the palace, depended upon their compliance. Their confidence was gained. Upon opening the gate, Major Allan found General Baird and several

officers with a large body of troops assembled. It was not safe to admit the troops, who were burning for vengeance. And Major Allan returned to conduct the Princes, whose reluctance to quit the palace was not easy to be overcome, to the presence of the General. General Baird was one of those British officers who had personally experienced the cruelty of their father, and suffered all the horrors of a three years' imprisonment in the place which he had now victoriously entered. His mind too had been inflamed by a report at that instant received, that Tippoo had murdered all the Europeans made prisoners during the siege. "He was nevertheless," says Major Allan, "sensibly affected by the sight of the Princes; and his gallantry on the assault was not more conspicuous, than the moderation and humanity which he on this occasion displayed. He received the Princes with every mark of regard: repeatedly assured them that no violence or insult should be offered to them, and he gave them in charge to two officers to conduct them to head quarters in camp." They were escorted by the light company of a European regiment; and the troops were ordered to pay them the compliment of presenting arms as they passed.

The mind dwells with peculiar delight upon these instances in which the sweet sympathies which one human being has with another, and which are of infinite importance in private life, prevail over the destructive passions, alternately the cause, and consequence, of war. The pleasure, at the same time, which we feel in conceiving the emotions produced in such a scene, lead the bulk of mankind to overvalue

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

greatly the virtues which they imply. When you have glutted upon your victim the passions of ambition and revenge; when you have reduced him from greatness and power, to the weakness and dependence which mark the insect on which you tread, a few tears, and the restraint of the foot from the final stamp, are not a very arduous virtue. The grand misfortune is to be made an insect. When that is done, it is a slight, if any addition to the misfortune to be crushed at once. The virtue to which exalted praise would be due, and to which human nature is gradually ascending, would be, to restrain in time the selfish desires which hurry us on to the havoc we are vain of contemplating with a sort of pity after we have made it. Let not the mercy, however, be slighted, which is shown even to the victim we have made. It is so much gained for human nature. It is a gain which, however late, the progress and diffusion of philosophy at last have produced; they will in time produce other and greater results.

When the persons of the Princes were secured, Tippoo was to be searched for in every corner of the palace. A party of English troops were admitted, and those of Tippoo disarmed. After proceeding through several of the apartments, the Kelledar was entreated, if he valued his own life, or that of his master, to discover where he was concealed. That officer, laying his hand upon the hilt of Major Allan's sword, protested, in the most solemn manner, that the Sultan was not in the palace; that he had been wounded during the storm; and was lying in a gateway on the northern side of the fort. He offered to conduct the inquirers; and submit to any punishment if he

was found to have deceived. General Baird and the officers who accompanied him, proceeded to the spot; covered with a promiscuous and shocking heap of bodies wounded and dead. At first, the bodies were dragged out of the gateway to be examined, it being already too dark to distinguish them where they lay. As this mode of examination, however, threatened to be very tedious, a light was procured, and Major Allan and the Kelledar went forward to the place. After some search, the Sultan's palankeen was discovered, and under it a person wounded, but not dead. He was afterwards ascertained to be the Raja Khan, one of Tippoo's most confidential servants, who had attended his master during the whole of the fatal day. This person being made acquainted with the object of the search, pointed out the spot where the Sultan had fallen. The body being brought out and sufficiently recognised, was conveyed in a palankeen to the palace. It was warm when first discovered; the eyes were open, the features not distorted, and Major Allan and Colonel Wellesley were for a few moments doubtful, whether it was not alive. It had four wounds, three in the trunk, and one in the temple, the ball of which, having entered a little above the right ear, had lodged in the cheek. His dress consisted of a jacket of fine white linen, loose drawers of flowered chintz, the usual girdle of the east, crimson-coloured, tied round his waist; and a handsome pouch, with a belt of silk, red and green, hung across his shoulder. He had an amulet on his arm; but his ornaments, if he wore any, were gone.[1]

[1] See Major Allan's own account of the scenes at the palace, and the

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

The speedy fall of the place was an event of great importance to the British army; for though the General had received a casual supply of provisions from an officer whose foresight exceeded that of the men who provided for the army, this afforded a supply for not more than a small number of days. The want of draught cattle rendered the magazines in the Coorg country totally useless: and though the General counted upon being in absolute want by the 6th of May, General Floyd did not return before the 13th with the convoys from the south. Of the operations which during the above transactions had taken place under the officers with whom General Floyd now returned to Seringapatam, the following are the principal. The corps which was placed under the command of Colonel Reade began by reducing the country north of Rayacottah. The plan of his operations embraced a great extent; but after a little progress he was apprized of the necessity of abandoning every thing to hasten with the grain which he had collected to Seringapatam. The troops under Colonel Brown began the campaign with the siege of Caroor, which surrendered to them without any serious resistance on the 5th of April. On the 8th they proceeded against Errode, and meant to prosecute the reduction of the remaining fortresses in Coimbetore, when they were summoned to join Colonel Reade, for the purpose of advancing to Seringapatam.

Colonel Reade arrived at Cauveryporam, on the 22nd of April, which surrendered to him without resistance. Having there collected the Brinjarries, and other

gateway; annexed (Appendix 42) to Beatson's View of the War with Tippoo Sultaun.

1799.

supplies, he left them under the protection of the fort, and with his detachment proceeded to clear the pass. This was an operation of considerable difficulty, which required all his exertions till the evening of the 27th; and the 6th of May arrived before the whole of the Brinjarries had ascended. General Floyd had by this time arrived at a place a few miles distant from the pass; and on the same day he was reinforced by junction of the southern corps of the army under Colonel Brown. On the 7th of May, the whole body, with their convoy, moved from Hannoor towards Seringapatam. As Tippoo's cavalry, under his best General, had closely followed General Floyd from Seringapatam, he expected to meet with considerable interruption to retard him on his return; and from this danger he was saved, only by the great event which had already arrived.

Such of the sons and officers of Tippoo, as were not taken in the fort, surrendered within a few days after the fate of the capital and its sovereign was known; and an adventurer of the name of Dhoondia was the only exception to the quiet submission of the whole country. This man, of Mahratta parentage, was born in the kingdom of Mysore, and served in the armies both of Hyder and Tippoo. He deserted during the war with Lord Cornwallis; and headed a predatory band in the region of the Toombudra. Tippoo induced him by fair professions to trust himself in his hand, and then immured him in a prison, where he had lain for several years, when he contrived to make his escape during the capture of Seringapatam; and soon collected around him a band of desperate adventurers; which rendered it necessary for General Harris to move the army to the northward

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

to dislodge him. This, however, was not the last effort of Dhoondia, whose history it is proper to finish at once. He was followed by his band of adventurers to the south; and made such rapid strides toward the establishment even of a sort of empire, that after a little time the government thought it proper to employ against him the army left under Colonel Wellesley for the government of Mysore. Dhoondia displayed no ordinary talents in his defence; and by his activity and judgment protracted for several months the efforts employed for his destruction. He could not, however, permanently resist the great superiority of force which was brought against him; and fell in a charge of cavalry which was led by the Colonel in person.[1]

The Sultan, when he lost his empire and his life, was about fifty years of age. He was rather above the middle size, and about five feet eight inches high; had a short neck and square shoulders, and now bordered on corpulency; but his limbs were slender, and his feet and hands remarkably small. His complexion was brown, his eyes large and full, his eyebrows small and arched, his nose aquiline; and in the expression of his countenance there was a dignity, which even the English, in spite of their antipathy and prejudices, felt and confessed.

Though French power was the grand resource upon which Tippoo relied, both for the gratification of his resentments, and for his protection against that reduction to the condition of a pensioned Nabob, the fate to which he believed that he was destined by the English, he made some efforts,

[1] Dispatches of the Duke of Wellington, i. 75.

but marked with his usual want of good sense, for obtaining support from other quarters. Beside his embassy to the Grand Signor at Constantinople, which excited, without much deserving, the attention of the English, he opened a communication in 1796 with Zeman Shah, the King of the Afghans, and sent an embassy which pointed out to that brother of the faith a glorious career against the nonbelievers or misbelievers of India. The Shah might conquer Delhi, drive out the Mahrattas, and establish his dominion over all that region of India, in one year; in the next, assail the Mahrattas and the Deccan from the north, while the Sultan co-operated with him from the south; and after this it would cost them little trouble to extend their empire over every part of India. This invasion of the Afghans, the English government for several years contemplated as an object of apprehension; and it was the ostensible cause, why the Commander-in-Chief was left in Bengal, and the conduct of the army committed to General Harris, in the last war against Tippoo.

The Sultan was too well apprized of the weakness of Nizam Ali, to expect from his alliance any material advantage; and, besides, he expected to induce the Mahrattas to yield him any useful assistance, chiefly by offering to join with them, in seizing the dominions of the Nizam. He maintained, from the time of the accession of Bajee Rao, a secret agent at Poona, whose endeavours were used to effect an intimate union. But Bajee Rao was held in thraldom by Sindiah; and any combination of Bajee Rao and Tippoo, which could have a tendency to emancipate the Peshwa from his subjection, was

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

opposed by the interests of Sindiah; and though Sindiah would have been well contented to join with the Sultan in any scheme of hostilities against the English, if it were not attended with danger, he was too much alarmed for his dominions in the north, which the English could easily invade, to be willing for the present to expose himself to the chance of so great an evil. From this state of affairs Tippoo seems to have despaired of getting the Mahrattas to act with any efficiency on his side; and for that reason not to have made any very strenuous exertions to induce them.

In these circumstances, beholding, as he must have done, the great inferiority of his power, his utter inability to maintain a contest against the English, and the probability that resistance would bring on his fall, it may well be regarded as surprising, that he did not endeavour, by prompt attention to their complaints, and early negotiation, to escape from the storm which he was unable to face. One of the most remarkable characteristics, however, of the Sultan's mind, was the want of judgment. For an Eastern prince, he was full of knowledge. His mind was active, acute, and ingenious. But, in the value which he set upon objects, whether as means, or as ends, he was almost perpetually deceived. Besides, a conviction appears to have been rooted in his mind, that the English had now formed a resolution to deprive him of his kingdom, and that it was useless to negotiate, because no submission, to which he could reconcile his mind, would restrain them in the gratification of their ambitious designs. Nor was he deprived of grounds of hope, which over

1799.

a mind like his were calculated to exert a fatal influence. He never could forget the manner in which his father had triumphed over a host of enemies by shutting himself up in his capital, and defending himself, till the season of the rains; nor had all his experience of the facility with which Europeans overcame the strongest defences in his power to rear, yielded on this point any decisive instruction. The principal part of his preparations for war had consisted in adding to the works of Seringapatam, and storing it with provisions for a siege. With the attempt to disable the Bombay army, the idea of even obstructing the march of the invaders, if not altogether abandoned, was very feebly pursued. And, till the English were upon the ramparts, he could not persuade himself that the fort of Seringapatam would be taken. His grand military mistake is acknowledged to have been the neglect of his cavalry; a proper use of which would have rendered the conquering of him a far more arduous task.

The original defects of his mind, arising from the vices of his education, appear to have increased as he advanced in years, and with peculiar rapidity since the loss of his dominions in 1792. The obedience which the will of princes, especially Eastern princes, is habituated to receive, not only renders them wretched when it is opposed, but gluts and palls them with the gratification. Each recurring instance becomes by familiarity insipid, or rather disgusting, and leaves the mind restless and impatient for a new gratification. This serves to account for the fickle and capricious disposition

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

which so commonly marks the character of princes; and in general prevails in them to a greater or less degree, in proportion to the natural vivacity and susceptibility of their minds. This disease infected the whole conduct of Tippoo Sultan, public and private, and latterly in a manner so extraordinary, that, when joined to a similar growth of his impatience at every disagreement between that which he willed and that which fell out, it produced in his subjects a persuasion that his mind was partially deranged. Like many other persons of active, but not powerful minds, he ran violently upon the observance of minuteness in minute details, but with little capacity of taking a marshalling view of a great whole. He saw but few therefore of the relations and dependencies of things; and was, of course, unable to anticipate justly their distant consequences. The temptation to please, rather than to serve, excluded Tippoo, as it excludes other princes, from the benefit of councils wiser than his own. Accustomed to hear, from those who approached him, that every sentiment which he uttered exceeded in wisdom that of every other man, any difference with his opinions struck him at last in the character of a mere demonstration of folly. As a general, he possessed, as had been abundantly proved by the English in former wars, no other talents than the vulgar ones of great activity, courage, and that turn for stratagem, which the cunning of a rude age has a tendency to produce. As a domestic ruler, he sustains an advantageous comparison with the greatest princes of the East. He bestowed a keen attention upon the conduct of his government, from

which he allowed himself to be diverted neither by pleasure nor by sloth. He made a methodical distribution of his time for business, in which he was laborious and exact; but in which his passion for detail made him frequently waste that attention upon minor, which ought to have been reserved to the greatest affairs. He had the discernment to perceive, what is so generally hid from the eyes of rulers in a more enlightened state of society, that it is the prosperity of those who labour with their hands which constitutes the principle and cause of the prosperity of states; he therefore made it his business to protect them against the intermediate orders of the community, by whom it is so difficult to prevent them from being oppressed. His country was, accordingly, at least during the first and better part of his reign, the best cultivated, and his population the most flourishing in India;[1] while, under

[1] The same was asserted, with more truth no doubt, of the state of Mysore under Hyder; but it is difficult to believe that a country should be flourishing which was the frequent scene of hostile movements, and the sovereign of which demanded large contributions from his subjects, in order to keep up a disproportionate military force. Climate and soil, and an agricultural people, do much to hide, if they do not remedy, the exactions of bad government; and a passing observer, who sees everywhere on his march abundant tillage, may easily misconceive of the condition of the inhabitants. The accounts of the prosperity of Mysore, under Hyder and Tippoo, must be received with hesitation; where tested by English experience they proved inaccurate. Munro was one of the officers appointed to manage some of the districts ceded by Tippoo in the first war, and his description of the state of things, as he found them, proves irrefutably that the management of the two Mohammedan princes of Mysore was not a whit preferable to that which succeeded them. "The collector cannot expect the country to flourish, when he has himself given the signal to plunder it. The numerous band of revenue servants require no encouragement to exercise the trade which they have always followed, but they now act without restraint, and are joined by the head farmers in stripping the unfortunate husbandmen of a great part of the produce of their labours.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

the English, and their dependants, the population of the Carnatic and Oude, hastening to the state of deserts, was the most wretched upon the face of the earth; and even Bengal itself, under the operation of laws ill adapted to the circumstances of the case, was suffering almost all the evils which the worst of governments could inflict. That Tippoo was severe, harsh, and perhaps cruel, in superintending the conduct of those who served him, may be so far easily believed, as his inordinate pride would make every offence which appeared to be committed against himself assume gigantic dimensions; and his habit of willing, and seeing his will realized, made him expect every event, willed by himself, as by a law of nature, which nothing but the misconduct of others could have disturbed. That the accounts, however, which we have received from our countrymen, who dreaded and feared him, are marked with exaggeration, is proved by this circumstance, that his servants adhered to him with a fidelity which those of few princes in any age or

This is the system under the Nabobs, under Tippoo, under the Company, and, I believe, under every government in India. The collectors and their deputies, not being paid, help themselves, and, by this means, the country is often as much harassed in peace as in war. The private dividend among Tippoo's managers is from twenty to forty per cent. Life i. 156. Again: "The Baramahl has now been completely surveyed, and the rents of it are fixed; they are on an average nearly what they were under Tippoo. The inhabitants paid the same then as now, but the deficiency of his receipts arose from the peculations of a host of revenue officers. The rents here, as I believe in every other part of India, are too high; this circumstance, joined to the general poverty of the people, is a great obstacle to every kind of improvement." Ibid. 204. There are other passages to the same purport, and they are fatal to a belief that the subjects of Tippoo were in any degree better circumstanced than those of the Company. The probability is, that their situation was worse.—W.

1799.

country have displayed.[1] Of his cruelty we have heard the more, because our own countrymen were among the victims of it. But it is to be observed, that, unless in certain instances, the proof of which cannot be regarded as better than doubtful, their sufferings, however intense, were only the sufferings of a very rigorous imprisonment, of which, considering the manner in which it is lavished by their own laws, Englishmen ought not to be very forward to complain. At that very time, in the dungeons of Madras or Calcutta, it is probable that unhappy sufferers were enduring calamities for debts of 100*l.*; not less atrocious than those which Tippoo, a prince born and educated in a barbarous country and ruling over a barbarous people, inflicted upon imprisoned enemies; enemies belonging to a nation, who, by the evils they had brought upon him, exasperated him almost to frenzy, and whom he regarded as the enemies both of God and of man.[2] Besides, there is among the papers relating to the intercourse of Tippoo with the French, a remarkable

[1] Without detracting from the character for fidelity borne by Tippoo's officers, it is to be remembered that the Sultan did not trust to it as a fixed and permanent principle which precluded the necessity of ensuring it by other means. "The families of all his principal officers had always been kept as hostages in Seringapatam." Munro, i. 219.—W.

[2] After the capture of Seringapatam, some native spies, employed by the English, asserted that the Sultan had ordered the death of thirteen English prisoners, taken during the siege; and a scrap of paper was found, said to be in his hand-writing, which bore the character of an order for the death of 100 Coorg prisoners.—All the evidence which accompanies these allegations would not be worthy of regard, but that the moral and intellectual state of the age and country of Tippoo renders such an act by no means improbable, under strong temptation, by any prince of the East. This, however, does not conclude Tippoo to be worse; it only supposes him not to be better than his neighbours.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

proof of his humanity, which, when these papers are ransacked for matters to criminate him, ought not to be suppressed. In the draught which he transmitted to the Isle of France, of the conditions on which he wished that a connexion between him and the French should be formed, the following are the very words of a distinct article: "I demand that male and female prisoners, as well English as Portuguese, who shall be taken by the republican troops, or by mine, shall be treated with humanity; and with regard to their persons, that they shall, (their property becoming the right of the allies,) be transported at our joint expense, out of India, to some place far distant from the territories of the allies."

Another feature in the character of Tippoo was his religion, with a sense of which his mind was most deeply impressed. He spent a considerable part of every day in prayer. He gave to his kingdom, or state, a particular religious title, *Khodadad*, or God-given; and he lived under a peculiarly strong and operative conviction of the superintendence of a Divine Providence. His confidence in the protection of God was, indeed, one of his snares; for he relied upon it to the neglect of other means of safety. To one of his French advisers, who had urged him with peculiar fervour to use greater zeal in obtaining the support of the Mahrattas, he replied, "I rely solely on Providence, expecting that I shall be alone and unsupported; but God, and my courage, will accomplish every thing."[1] It is true, that his zeal for God

[1] See the letter from Tippoo Sultaun to M. Du Buc, dated Seringapatam, 2nd Jan. 1799; papers printed by order of the House of Commons in 1800.

like the zeal of so many other people, was supported by the notion, and by the desire, of being the favourite of God; of being honoured with the chief place in his affections, and obtaining the best share in the distribution of his favours. His religion resembled the religion of most of the persons anxious to distinguish themselves for pious zeal, in this respect also; that it contained in it a large infusion of the persecuting spirit. He imagined that he exceedingly pleased the Almighty, by cultivating within himself a hatred of all those whose notions of a God did not correspond with his own; and that he should take one of the most effectual modes of recommending himself to that powerful and good Being, if, in order to multiply the number of true believers, he applied evil to the bodies of those who were not of that blessed description.

It would not be reckoned pardonable by Englishmen, if an historian were to omit ambition, and the hatred of the English, among the ingredients in the character of Tippoo. But ambition is too vulgar a quality in the minds of princes to deserve particular commemoration; and as for his hatred of the English, it only resembled the hatred which the English bore to him, or to the French; and which proud individuals, and proud nations, are so prone to feel, towards all those who excite their fears, or circumscribe their hopes. Besides, among the princes of India, who, except the drivellers, were less ambitious than he? Was it Sindiah, or was it Holkar? Even in hatred of the English, is it understood, that these Mahrattas were exceeded by the sovereign of Mysore?[1]

[1] This extenuation of the defects of Tippoo's character is no doubt

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

When the papers of Tippoo, found in the palace of Seringapatam, were examined, the correspondence was discovered which had passed between him and the French. With this Lord Wellesley shows that he was singularly delighted; as if, without such means of persuasion, he had dreaded, that the grounds of the war, successfully terminated, would not have appeared satisfactory to all those whose approbation he was interested in obtaining. It is, therefore, necessary that the amount of its contents should be declared. Some time before the beginning

prompted by our author's usual generous disposition to protect those whom all other persons assail. Notwithstanding this spirit, however, he is compelled to admit that Tippoo rashly provoked a storm he was unable to face, instigated by an ungovernable hatred of the English, both on account of their power and their religion. It is difficult to understand how this fatal want of judgment is reconcileable with an active, acute, and ingenious mind, or one even for that of an Eastern prince full of knowledge. That the Sultan had an active mind may be allowed, but it was the activity of restlessness, accompanied by cunning, rather than acuteness,—by caprice rather than ingenuity. Of his knowledge there is no proof, and he was evidently ignorant of the relative position of the French and English when he trusted to the support of the former in a contest with the latter. In his military capacity it is admitted that he displayed courage without conduct. The merits of his civil government are, as above noticed, exaggerated at least, if not altogether misstated. The imprisonment of debtors in Calcutta and Madras, as a consequence of legal enactments, however objectionable in their origin, is a very different thing from the sufferings and massacre of prisoners taken in the chances of war, and is no excuse for the vindictive cruelty exercised by Tippoo upon all, whether Europeans or natives, who were the objects of his vengeance. As to his religion, he not only partook largely of that intolerance which is a prominent feature of the Mohammedan faith, but it was degraded by the grossest superstition, faith in dreams, magic, and astrology; articles of belief, not uncommon it is true amongst the great men of the East, but in a special degree professed by Tippoo, and indicating none of that fulness of knowledge and acuteness of understanding for which in the outset of this sketch of his character, credit has been given him. The general tendency of the description is, therefore, to convey an unfaithful portraiture of a prince, who, although he may claim compassion for his fate, can never by any sophistry be held up as an object of sympathy or respect.—W.

of April, 1797, the Captain of a privateer from the Mauritius, Citizen Ripaud by name, whose ship, damaged in some engagement, had nearly foundered at sea, arrived in the country of Tippoo, and was conveyed to the capital; where several of his countrymen had long been high in the service of the Prince. This man, so illiterate that he could not spell his own language, and ready, as appears by his letters of the 23rd of May, 1797, for the perpetration of any crime, even against his own countrymen, was eager by imposture to recommend himself to the favour of the Sultan. He represented that the French government were not only burning with a desire to invade the possessions of the English in India, but were almost ready for the execution of that great design, having made vast preparations, forwarded a large body of troops to the Isle of France, and chiefly waiting till they could learn how much assistance they might expect from their ancient friend, the Sultan of Mysore. Tippoo, as eager fully as Englishmen, to believe what he eagerly desired, thought he could not be too expeditious in sending men to ascertain the circumstances; and in endeavouring to derive advantage from them should they appear to correspond with report. So completely was Tippoo deceived by the representation of Ripaud, that he thought it was only necessary to name the extent of the assistance which he wished to receive. He demanded an army of from 30,000 to 40,000 men, of whom he required that from 5000 to 10,000 should be veteran troops; and, in addition to an army of this magnitude, he thought it proper to exact the assistance of a fleet. In contributing to

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799. the common enterprise, he proposed to take the whole expense of the army upon himself; and, as soon as it arrived, to join it with all his forces; when the expulsion of the English, he trusted, would not be a tardy result. As he believed, according to the statement of his informer, that nothing was wanting for the immediate departure of such a body of troops, but his assent to the conditions with which it was expected he should comply, he took the requisite measures for its being immediately bestowed. Four vakeels proceeded to the coast in April, 1797; but before they were ready to depart the monsoon set in. During the delay which it occasioned, the vakeels are said to have fallen into disputes and dissensions. This with other causes induced the Sultan to annul their appointment; and the actual mission, which at last consisted of only two persons, did not depart till the October following. Extreme was the disappointment which these vakeels, whom in the whole of this intercourse, the Governor-General, to exalt the notion of its importance, dubs with the title of ambassadors, though the agent whom the meanest individual employs to transact for him a business of a few rupees, is his vakeel, experienced upon their arrival in the Isle of France. They expected to have nothing further to do than to set their seal, in the name of their master, to the conditions which he had given them in writing. This was called, in the pompous language of Citizen Ripaud, to contract an alliance offensive and defensive with the French Republic, one and indivisible, terms which the Sultan could not understand, as his language wanted words to correspond.

And when this simple operation was performed, they expected to return with a grand army to Mysore. They found that not only was there at the Isle of France no force whatsoever, which could be spared for the use of their master, but that no intimation had, by the government of France, been conveyed to the constituted authorities of the island of any intention to send an army to India; and that those authorities were not vested with a power to form engagements with Tippoo of any description. Nothing did the rulers of the island find themselves competent to perform, except to forward the letters of the Sultan to the government of France, and offer aid to them in raising a few volunteers. Assistance so contemptible in comparison of what they and their master expected, the vakeels at first refused to accept. And no small importunity appears to have been necessary to conquer their determination.

In the report of their proceedings, which they were required to give to their master upon their return, they say, "The four chiefs of Mauritius told us personally, that the European Ripaud had brought us here on a false representation to the Sultaun; and that at present they had no forces," A member of the legislative body of the island, who, because he had served in a military capacity in India, and was known to the Sultan, sent him a letter along with the returning vakeels, declared; "Our grief was profound to learn that you had been deceived by Ripaud as to our forces on this island. The only reinforcement which has been sent to us from France, since the commencement of the war, is one battalion, which we have sent to Batavia, to assist the Dutch

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

in the preservation of that place. This we did, in return for the assistance which we had drawn from thence in money, provisions, and naval stores; for you must know, great Prince, that our own resources are insufficient for our support; and we have sworn to bury ourselves under the ruins of our island, rather than see our enemies its possessors."[1] The hopes which the French rulers held out that more efficient assistance might possibly be obtained by application to the French government at Paris, obviously deserve attention merely as expedients to evade the chagrin of the vakeels. The number of Frenchmen in the service of the Sultan amounted not to more than 120 men.[2]

The confidence which Tippoo reposed in the strength of Seringapatam, especially when protected by God, and his own courage, had prevented him from making any provision against an event which

[1] See the papers relating to the war with Tippoo, printed by order of the House of Commons, in 1800. In the report which the vakeels, upon their return, made to the Sultan of their proceedings, they expressly state, that the Governor of the Isle of France waited upon them, and said, "that Ripaud had made an erroneous representation to your Highness, which occasioned us to be deputed." And before their departure, they were informed by the Governor, that he would send with them a gentleman, (one of those by whom they were actually accompanied) "who should reside at the presence in quality of vakeel, that the other Frenchmen might not, by telling falsities, like Ripaud, deceive your Highness."

[2] Beatson, i. 139.

The attention is here diverted from the more important contents of the papers to the circumstances which led to Tippoo's connexion with the Isle of France, but from the documents themselves it appeared that the Sultan had addressed the Directory in July, 1798, proposing an offensive and defensive alliance with France, for the purpose of expelling the English from India, announcing at the same time his determination not to wait for the forces of his allies, but to commence the attack on the first favourable occasion. Dispatches, 591. The whole of the correspondence, forming a large volume, was translated and printed in Calcutta. Ibid. 597.—W.

he reckoned so very improbable as its fall. Not only his family, therefore, but the whole of his treasure, was deposited in the fort: and as the palace was obtained by a species of capitulation, without the irruption of the soldiers, there was no suspicion that any portion of the money or jewels which he had in store, was not publicly obtained, and fully brought to account. It hence appeared, to the clearest satisfaction, how exaggerated and extravagant had been the conception of his enormous riches, and hence of his dangerous resources for war. The whole amount of the remaining specie, which Tippoo had treasured up, was about sixteen lacs of pagodas (640,000*l*); and his jewels, of which in common with the Princes of the East he was fond, and with which they never part, except in their greatest extremity, were valued at about nine lacs (360,000*l*) more. So far was such a sum from rendering its owner formidable to a power like that of the British in India, that the Governor-General in Council did not reckon it too much to be immediately distributed to the army, as a donative, in reward of the virtues which it had displayed during the campaign.

The English were now in possession of the kingdom of Mysore; and the only question which it remained for the Governor-General to decide, was the momentous one, how a kingdom was to be disposed of. He was not insensible to the difficulties which attended upon his decision; and the delicacy which was required, in balancing between the love of territory, on the one hand, and the suspicion and odium on the other, to which the destruction of another prince, and the annexation of

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

any considerable part of his kingdom to an empire already of vast dimensions, would be exposed, both in Europe and in India. This part of his task he performed with the greatest address. The Nizam, though from the inferior part which he had taken in the war, he was not entitled to an equal share with the English in the benefits which resulted from it, was gratified by receiving an equal portion of territory. The necessity, however, was inculcated, of moderation in the desires of both; and the principle which was laid down was, that they should content themselves with such a portion of territory, as would indemnify them for the charges of the war, and yield security. The word security, brought in upon this occasion, was calculated to answer any purpose, to which they, who made use of it, had, or could have, any desire to employ it. Demands for security had no limit, but the pleasure and power of those by whom they were set up. When the subsequent inquirer asks, Security against whom? It is not easy to find an answer. Security against Tippoo? He was no more. Security against Nizam Ali, and the English, against one another? That was impossible; for they were both to be aggrandized, and in an equal degree. Was it security against the Mahrattas? No, for they also were to be offered a part of the divided territory, which was the way to make them more, not less dangerous neighbours than they were before. On the principle, then, of indemnification and security, it was decreed, that the English, on their part, should take to themselves the whole of the territory possessed by the Sultan on

the Malabar coast, the district of Coimbetore and Daramporam, the whole of the country which intervened between the Company's territory on the western, and that on the eastern coast, yielding now an uninterrupted dominion from sea to sea; along with these possessions, the forts and posts forming the heads of the principal passes above the Ghauts on the table-land;[1] the district of Wynaad; and, lastly, the fortress, city, and island of Seringapatam, as a place which effectually secured the communication between the British territory on both coasts, and strengthened the lines of defence in every direction. A territory, affording an equal revenue with that which by the English was taken for themselves, was given to Nizam Ali, in the districts of Gooty, Gurrumcondah, and the tract of country which lies along the line of the great forts of Chittledroog, Sera, Nundidroog, and Colar, but without the forts, which it was supposed would render his frontier too strong. With regard to the third party in the alliance against Tippoo, they had entirely abstained from all participation in the war; and it would not, in the opinion of the Governor-General, have been good policy, to place on the same level, in the distribution of the spoil, those who did all, and those who did nothing, in the acquiring of it. This would be to encourage allies to be useless, when their services were required. So much territory as was taken by the English, and given to Nizam Ali,

[1] Col. Beatson says, (p. 254), that in 1788 he "ascertained the position and nature of not less than sixty passes through the mountains, several of which are practicable for armies, and two-thirds, at least, of that number sufficiently open to the incursions of cavalry."

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

would, also, yield to the Mahrattas more than enough of strength. Still it was desirable to conciliate the good will of that people to the present proceedings; and to give them an interest in the arrangements which were made. A portion of territory, from one half to two thirds of the value of that which was taken by the English and given to Nizam Ali, would, it was concluded, answer these ends. This portion was to include Harpoonelly, Soonda above the Ghauts, Annagoody, and some other districts; with part of the territory, not however including the fortresses, of Chittledroog and Bednore.

Of the portion which still remained of the territory gained from Tippoo, yielding thirteen lacs of pagodas, a revenue greater than that of the ancient Rajaship of Mysore, it was accounted politic to form a separate state. For sovereign, the choice lay between the family of Tippoo, and that of the ancient Hindu Rajas, who had been kept in confinement, but not extinguished, by Hyder Ali and his son. In the sons of Tippoo, the due degree of passive submission was reckoned much less probable than in those of a family, who, having lost all expectation of reigning, would take even liberty as a boon, much more sovereignty, though in its most shadowy form. The direct male descendant of the Mysore Rajas was a child of a few years old; and to him it was decreed that the title of sovereign should belong. The conditions upon which he was to receive his dignity were as follows; That the whole of the military force maintained for the defence of the country should be English; That for the

expense of it he should annually pay seven lacs of pagodas; That in case of war, or of preparation for war, the English might exact any larger sum, which they deemed proportional to the resources of the Raja; And last of all, should they be dissatisfied with his government in any respect, they might interpose to any extent in the internal administration of the country, or even take the unlimited management of it to themselves. In this manner, it is evident, that the entire sovereignty of the country was assumed by the British, of whom the Raja and his ministers could only be regarded as Vicegerents at will. It was, therefore, with some reason the Governor-General said, "I entertain a sanguine expectation, that the Raja and his ministers, being fully apprized of the extensive powers reserved to the Company, will cheerfully adopt such regulations as shall render the actual exercise of these powers unnecessary;" for knowing themselves to hold a situation totally dependent upon the will of another, whatever emanated from that will, they were bound, without a choice, to obey. How long, with whatever dispositions to obedience, their performance of the services exacted of them will give satisfaction, depends upon circumstances of a sort which cannot be foreseen.

The Governor-General was perfectly aware of the share of the sovereignty which he had taken, and the share which he had left. "Under these arrangements," he said, "I trust that I shall be enabled to command the whole resources of the Raja's territory;" adding, what were very desirable results, that under these arrangements he also trusted to be ena-

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

bled "to improve its cultivation, to extend its commerce, and to secure the welfare of its inhabitants." For appropriating such "extensive powers," (so they are called by himself,) the reasons which he assigned pronounced a violent condemnation of the policy so long pursued; and of which such applauded rulers as Hastings and Cornwallis had made their boast; the policy of only sharing the powers of government, with the native princes of Oude, the Carnatic, and Tanjore. "Recollecting the inconveniences and embarrassments which have arisen to all parties concerned, under the *double* government, and *conflicting* authorities unfortunately established in Oude, the Carnatic, and Tanjore, I resolved to reserve to the Company the most extensive and indisputable powers." This is to boast explicitly, that no double government, no conflicting authorities, were left in Mysore; that, by consequence, the powers of government were, without participation, engrossed by the English. What then, it may be asked, was the use of setting up the shadow of a Raja? The sources of evil were manifest. A considerable expense was rendered necessary for the splendour of his state: And it was utterly impossible to govern the country so well through the agency of him and his ministers, as it might have been governed by the direct application of European intelligence and virtue. But this Raja was a species of screen, put up to hide, at once from Indian and from European eyes, the extent of aggrandizement which the British territory had received, and it so far answered the purpose, that, though an obvious, it undoubtedly claims the praise of an adroit, and well-timed political expedient. It enabled the Governor-

General to dismiss Nizam Ali with a much smaller share of the prey, than would have satisfied him, had the English taken without disguise the whole of what in this manner they actually appropriated.[1] It precluded the Mahrattas from those attempts to excite a jealousy of the English, to which it was known they were abundantly disposed. And it imposed completely, as well upon those members of the British legislature, who would have been pleased with an opportunity to criticize; as upon the men whose criticisms are more extensively disseminated through the press; all of whom, or almost all, were too defective, it seems, in the requisite lights, to see through the game that was played: For though none of the great acts of Marquis Wellesley's administration is more questionable than the attack upon Tippoo Sultan, that is a part which, till now, has been exempt from censure.

The territory, thus in name transferred to a Hindu Raja, whose residence was to be the ancient city of Mysore, while the benefits of its sovereignty were all transferred to the English, was bounded on the north by a strong line of hill-fortresses and posts, Chittledroog, Sera, Nundidroog, and Colar, forming a powerful barrier towards the southern frontiers of Nizam Ali and the Mahrattas, from Panganoor on the line of the eastern, to Bednore on the line of the western Ghauts, the whole occupied and defended, for the benefit of the English, by English troops;

[1] The Governor-General expressly declares, that beside the jealousy of the Mahrattas, the partition of Mysore between the English and the Nizam would have raised the power of that prince to a dangerous height: and would have given him many strong fortresses which could not have been placed in his hands without imminent danger to the British frontier.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8. 1799.

and on the three other sides, east, west, and south, it was entirely surrounded by the territories of the Company, above and below the Ghauts.

To the family of Tippoo, if we make allowance for the loss of a throne, as well as to the principal men of his kingdom, the conduct of the Governor-General was considerate and generous. The fortress of Velore, in the Carnatic, was appropriated for the residence of the royal family, and fitted up commodiously for their reception, with an allowance for their support, more liberal than that which they had received from Tippoo himself. The principal men were all provided for by jaghires or pensions, conformable to their rank and influence, with a generosity which not only contented, but greatly astonished themselves. They were the more easily pleased, that Tippoo, centering all authority in his own person, rendered it impossible for his servants to acquire any influence beyond the immediate exercise of their official powers; and as the frugality of his administration was severe, their emoluments were uncommonly small. The same circumstances facilitated the settlement of the country; for, as no individual possessed any authority sufficient to make resistance, when Tippoo was gone, and as the character of the English was sufficiently known to inspire confidence, the chiefs made their submission without hesitation or delay. When one of Tippoo's confidential servants was sent to treat with the officer at the head of the cavalry, the celebrated Kummir ad din Khan, he refused to stipulate for terms, and said he cast himself entirely upon the generosity of the English.

In the treaty which was signed by Nizam Ali and

the English, entitled the partition Treaty of Mysore, for establishing the arrangements which have just been described, it was fixed, that, unless the Peshwa acceded to the said treaty within the space of one month, gave satisfaction relative to some disputes with Nizam Ali, and complied with certain conditions, not specified, in favour of the English, the territory, which it was meant to bestow upon him, should be shared between the remaining allies, in the proportion of two thirds to Nizam Ali, and one to the English.[1]

When the terrors which Tippoo suspended over the Mahrattas, and the dependence which they felt upon the English against the effects of his ambition and power, were destroyed, it was not expected that their hostile dispositions, which had already so ill disguised themselves, could long be restrained.[2] The power of Nizam Ali was now the only barrier between

[1] See the papers relating to the war with Tippoo, printed by order of the House of Commons in 1800. See also the Treaty with the Nizam, and that with the Raja of Mysore. For the whole of the concluding struggle with Tippoo, we have very complete information, not only in the official papers, which have been pretty fully given in print, but in the valuable works, so frequently quoted, of Beatson and Wilks. For the character of Tippoo, and some parts of his politics, hints are afforded by the volume of his letters, for which we are indebted to Col. Kirkpatrick.—M. The Lives of Munro, Harris, Baird, and the Dispatches of Lord Wellesley supply fully whatever the prior authorities left wanting.—W.

[2] Indications of a hostile spirit in the Peshwa and Sindia had been discovered even before the capture of Seringapatam. On the 23rd April the Governor-General writes to General Harris, "Dowlut Rao Sindia has been discovered to entertain hostile designs against the Company and the Nizam, and I have reason to suspect that a secret correspondence subsists between him and Tippoo. The Peshwa appears to have entered into Sindia's views against the Company and the Nizam, and on the 26th "the danger of an early attack upon the dominions of the Nizam, by Dowlet Rao Sindia, either singly or in concert with the Peshwa, appears to have increased. Dispatches, i. 558, 581.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1799.

the English possessions in the Deccan, and the irruptions of that formidable nation; and how small the resistance which he was capable of yielding, the English had abundantly perceived. In one way, it appeared sufficiently easy to augment his capacity for war. He was acutely sensible of the dangers to which he was exposed at the hands of the Mahrattas, and of his incompetency to his own defence. He was therefore abundantly desirous of receiving such additions to the number of the British troops already in his pay, as would suffice to allay his apprehensions. But the payment of these troops suggested itself to the foresight of the English rulers, as creating difficulties and dangers which it was not easy to overlook. So fickle and capricious were the councils of the Subahdar, that he might suddenly adopt the resolution of dismissing the English troops from his service; while the impoverishment of his country by mal-administration, and the exhaustion of his resources by useless expenses, portended a moment not far distant, when he would be deprived of power to pay as many troops as would satisfy the ideas of security which the English rulers entertained. One expedient presented itself to the imagination of the Governor-General, as adapted to all the exigencies of the case; and he resolved not to omit so favourable an opportunity of realizing the supposed advantage. If Nizam Ali, instead of paying a monthly or annual subsidy for the maintenance of the troops whose service he was willing to receive, would alienate to the English in perpetuity a territory with revenue sufficient for the expense, a military force might then be established in his dominions, on the least precarious

of all securities. The evils were, in the first place, a violation of the act of parliament, which forbade extension of territory; but that had always been violated with so little ceremony, and lately in so extraordinary a manner, that this constituted an objection of trivial importance: in the second place, the real difficulties of administering the ceded territory, so frugally and beneficently, as to render its produce equal to its expense; difficulties, it is probable, which were but little understood: and lastly, the grand general evil, that, in proportion as territory augments, and with it the amount and complexity of the business which its administration involves, it becomes more and more impossible for the superintending power to take securities, that the business of government shall not be negligently and corruptly performed; since, beside the inability of attention to extend itself minutely beyond a limited range of affairs, distance from the eye of government gradually weakens its powers, and at last annihilates a great portion of them. Overbalancing advantages appeared to flow, from the funds which would thus be secured for the maintenance of a considerable army, from the security which this army would afford against the Mahrattas, and from the sovereignty which it would transfer to the English over Nizam Ali and his dominions; though his dominions were governed so ill, that little advantage could be hoped from them.[1] The documents relative

[1] The proposition for the territorial grant originated with Azim-ul-Omra, the minister of the Nizam; and it was believed by the Governor-General that the court of Hyderabad was sincerely disposed, and even secretly anxious for a commutation of the subsidy. In the first plan of the treaty, however, an alternative was retained of paying the subsidy in money, whenever convenient, a stipulation to which the English Government

BOOK VI CHAP. 8.

1800.

to the negotiation have not been made public; and we know not in what manner that Prince at first received the proposition, nor what modes of inducement were employed to obtain his consent. However, on the 12th of October, 1800, a treaty was signed; by which important contract, the English added two battalions of sepoys, and a regiment of native cavalry, to the force which they engaged to uphold in the service of the Subahdar, and also bound themselves to defend his dominions against every aggression; while, on his part, Nizam Ali ceded to the English, in perpetual sovereignty, all the acquisitions which he had made from the territory of Tippoo, either by the late treaty, or by that of Seringapatam, in 1792; and agreed neither to make war, nor so much as negotiate, by his own authority; but, referring all disputes between himself and other states to the English, to be governed by their decision, allowing the subsidiary troops in his service to be employed by the English in all their wars, joined by 6000 of his own horse, and 9000 of his infantry, only reserving two of the English battalions which should always be attached to his person. For the purpose of obtaining the Tumboodrah as a clear and distinct boundary, Kupoor, Gujunder Gur, and some other districts, lately acquired from Tippoo, were exchanged for Adoni and a few places on the southern

objected; and in the counter-plan it was distinctly asserted that no other effectual or satisfactory security than an absolute assignment of territory could be given by the Nizam for the regular payment of the subsidy. The extreme anxiety of the Nizam to have assurance of protection against the Mahrattas removed all impediments to an amicable adjustment of the conditions, the principle of which he had already recognised. Dispatches, ii. 275, and App. 713.—W.

side of the river. With regard to the family and subjects of the Subahdar, it was stipulated that he was to remain absolute, and the English were on no pretext to dispute his authority. A revenue of about 1,758,000 pagodas arose from the territory ceded by this treaty to the English.[1]

Of this engagement, as it affected the interests of the English, the nature may be described in a single sentence. The English acquired a small territory, with the obligation of defending a large one. If it be said, that it was as easy to defend the Nizam's territory, in addition to their own, as it was to defend their own without that of the Nizam, and that the revenue of the new territory was all therefore clear gain, the declaration is unfounded. If the act of parliament, which was set up for a show, but in practice trampled upon habitually, and by those who made it, as shamelessly, as by those for whose coercion it was made, is worthy on such an occasion to be quoted, it may be recollected, that, according to the doctrine which, in that enactment, guided the legislature, all extension of territory was bad, because it cost more to defend it, than it could be made to produce; much more of course, when a small territory was acquired with the burden of defending another, several times as large.

A clause was inserted, to say, that if the Peshwa or Dowlut Rao Sindia, should desire to have a part in this treaty, they should be admitted to all its advantages; in other words, they should have a sub-

[1] A sketch of the Political History of India, from the Introduction of Mr. Pitt's Bill, A. D. 1784, to the present Date, by Sir John Malcolm, pp. 282—287. Collection of Treaties.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 8.

1800.

sidiary force on the same terms as Nizam Ali. But so far were the Mahrattas from desiring an alliance of this description, that the Peshwa, under the dictation of Sindia, refused to accept the territory which was reserved to him out of the spoils of Tippoo; it was therefore divided by the English between themselves and the Subahdar.

CHAPTER IX.

Situation of Oude, as left by Lord Teignmouth, highly satisfactory to the home Authorities.—Great Changes meditated by Lord Mornington.—Extirpation of British Subjects, not in the Service of the Company.—Apprehended Invasion of the Afghans.—Endeavour to obtain the Alliance of Sindia.—The Idea abandoned.—An Embassy to the King of Persia.—Insurrection by Vizir Ali.—Reform of his Military Establishment pressed on the Nabob of Oude.—His Reluctance.—He proposes to abdicate in favour of his Son.—The Governor-General presses him to abdicate in favour of the Company.—He refuses.—Indignation of the Governor-General.—He resorts to coercion on the Reform, which meant, the Annihilation, of the Nabob's Military Establishment.—The business of the Annihilatian judiciously per-

formed.—The Vizir alleges the want of Resources for the Maintenance of so great a British Army. —From this, the Governor-General infers the Necessity of taking from him the Government of his Country.—If the Nabob would not give up the whole of his Country willingly, such a Portion of it as would cover the Expense of the British Army to be taken by Force.—This was more than one half—The Vizir to be allowed no independent Power even in the rest.—The Vizir desires to go on a Pilgrimage.—The Hon. H. Wellesley sent to get from him an appearance of Consent.—The Cession of the Portion necessary for the Expense of the Army effected—A Commission for settling the Country with Mr. H. Wellesley at the head.—Governor-General makes a Progress through the Country.—Transactions between him and the Nabob of Oude.—Proposition of the Bhow Begum.—Objections of the Court of Directors to the Appointment of Mr. H. Wellesley.—Overruled by the Board of Control.—Government of Furruckabad assumed by the Company.—Settlement of the Ceded Districts.—Full Approbation of the home Authorities.

1799.

THE arrangements formed by the late Governor-General, Sir John Shore, with respect to the kingdom of Oude, satisfied the capacious desires of the London authorities. Under date the 15th of May, 1799, a despatch, intended to convey their sentiments to the instruments of government in India, has the following passages:

"By the definitive treaty concluded at Lucknow,

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

the Company's influence over the Vizir's country appears to be sufficiently preserved; without the insertion of any article, which, in its operation, might lead to an interference in the collections, on the part of the Company, that might be deemed offensive. And we have the further satisfaction to find, that, (exclusive of the immediate payment of twelve lacs of rupees by the Nabob Vizir),—his annual subsidy is increased upwards of twenty lacs of rupees; besides the acquisition of a fortress in the Oude dominions, of the greatest consequence in the scale of general defence: with other stipulations, which have a tendency to remedy former defects in our political connexion with that country, and to give the Company such an ascendency as cannot fail to be productive of material benefit to both parties: and which, we trust, will lead to the establishment of a good system of government in Oude, which hitherto all our endeavours, for a series of years, have been unable to accomplish.

"The late Governor-General had given us reason to expect, that, for the first year, or perhaps longer, after Saadut Ali's accession, his revenues would probably fall considerably short of their estimated amount; and that he would find considerable difficulty in fulfilling his pecuniary engagements with the Company:—and very satisfactorily assigned the ground of that opinion. We are, therefore, not surprised to find by the last acccounts, that an arrear had accumulated in the payment of the Company's tribute, to the amount of upwards of eighteen lacs of rupees. Lord Mornington having represented, however, that he believes the Nabob is sincerely dis-

posed to make every possible effort for the liquidation of this arrear, as well as for introducing such a system of order and economy into the management of his finances as will enable him to be more punctual in his future payments, we entertain a well-grounded expectation that every cause of complaint upon this head will speedily terminate."

The affairs of Oude being thus settled in a manner which bids fair to be permanent; and it appearing by your political despatch of the 17th April, 1798, that the most perfect tranquillity continues to prevail in the Vizir's dominions; and as the resolutions of the late Governor-General, of the 9th and 30th October, 1797, for the augmentation of the army, were declared to be connected with the proposed arrangements for that country, we direct that you take into your immediate consideration the propriety of disbanding those new levies, or the necessity of continuing them."[1]

While the home authorities were thus congratulating themselves upon the state in which the affairs of Oude were left by the late Governor-General, and pleasing themselves with the belief of its permanence, the new Governor-General was meditating the most important changes. In the political letter from Bengal, as early as the 3rd of October, 1798, the authorities at home were informed; "The Right Honourable the Governor-General has now under consideration the present state of affairs in Oude, and particularly the best means of securing the regular payment of the subsidy, and of reforming

[1] Papers printed by order of the House of Commons in 1806, i. 30.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

the Nabob's army."[1] And on the 23rd of December of the same year, the Governor-General wrote, in a private letter to the Resident; "The necessity of providing for the defence of the Carnatic, and for the early revival of our alliances in the Peninsula, as well as for the seasonable reduction of the growing influence of France in India, has not admitted either my visiting Oude, or of my turning my undivided attention to the *reform* of the Vizir's affairs. There are, however, two or three leading considerations, in the state of Oude, to which I wish to direct your particular notice; intending, at an early period, to enter fully into the arrangement in which they must terminate.—Whenever the death of Almas shall happen, an opportunity will offer of securing the benefits of Lord Teignmouth's treaty, by provisions, which seem necessary for the purpose of realizing the subsidy, under all contingencies. The Company ought to succeed to the power of Almas. And the management, if not the sovereignty, of that part of the Doab, which he now rents, ought to be placed in our hands, a proportionate reduction being made from the subsidy; the strength of our north-western frontier would also be increased. On the other hand, in the event of Almas's death, we shall have to apprehend either the dangerous power of a successor equal to him in talents and activity, or the weakness of one inferior in both, or the division of the country among a variety of renters; in the first case we should risk internal commotion; in the two latter the frontier of Oude would be considerably

[1] Papers, ut supra, v. 3.

weakened against the attacks either of the Abdalli or of any other invader. The only remedy for these evils will be the possession of the Doab fixed in the hand of our government. The state of the Vizir's troops is another most pressing evil. To you I need not enlarge on their inefficiency and insubordination. My intention is to persuade his Excellency, at a proper season, to disband the whole of his own army, with the exception of such part of it as may be necessary for the purposes of state, or of collection of revenue. In the place of the armed rabble which now alarms the Vizir, and invites his enemies, I propose to substitute an increased number of the Company's regiments of infantry and cavalry, to be relieved from time to time, and to be paid by his Excellency. I have already increased our establishment to the extent of seventeen regiments of infantry, with the view of transferring three regiments to the service of his Excellency.—With respect to the Vizir's civil establishments, and to his abusive systems for the extortion of revenue, and for the violation of every principle of justice, little can be done before I can be enabled to visit Lucknow."[1]

The hostility of the Governor-General to his fellow-subjects, pursuing, independently of the Company, their occupations in any part of India, is expressed, without a word to indicate reasons, in the same letter, thus; "The number of Europeans, particularly of British subjects, established in Oude, is a mischief which requires no comment. My resolution is fixed, to dislodge every European, ex-

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 2. 3.—M. Despatches, i. 386.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

cepting the Company's servants. My wish is, to occasion as little private distress as possible, but the public service must take its course; and it is not to be expected that some cases of hardship will not be found in the extent of so great a measure." These last words indicate extensive numbers. Why did not the Governor-General, before he dared to strike at the fortunes of great numbers of his countrymen, declare and prove, the evils which they produced? For what reason is it, let them declare, who know what is understood, under such a government as ours, by the responsibility of the ruling few, that he has never yet been effectually called upon to account for such a conduct? The good which they were calculated to produce is obvious to all. The question still remains unanswered; What were the evils? [1]

The threat of Zemaun Shah, King of the Abdallees, or Afghans, became a convenient source of pretexts for urging upon the Vizir the projected innovations. This prince had succeeded his father Timur Shah, the son of the celebrated Ahmed Shah, the founder of the dynasty, in the year 1792. His dominions extended from the mouths of the Indus to

[1] With a few exceptions, the Europeans who found their way to the native courts, whilst the sytem of exclusion from residence in the Company's territories without permission prevailed, were mere adventurers, without capital or character, education or principle, who were recommended to the princes of India by a supposed fitness for military command, or an imagined influence with the authorities in England, which might be a check upon those in India. The evils resulting from the access of such persons in any numbers were sufficiently obvious, and had been abundantly experienced at Madras, Hyderabad, and Oude, and fully warranted the determination of the Governor-General to use all possible means for their prevention.—W.

the parallel of Kashmere; and from the boundaries of the Seiks, at some distance eastward of the great river Attock, to the vicinity of the Persian Tershish; including the territories of Kabul, Kandahar, Peishere, Ghizni, Gaur, Sigistan, Korassan, and Kashmere. In the year 1796, this prince advanced to Lahore; and though his force was not understood to exceed 33,000 men, almost wholly cavalry, he struck terror into the Mahrattas; and excited alarm in the English government itself. The object of the Shah, as announced by rumour,[1] was, to re-establish the House of Timur, to which he was nearly related, and restore the true faith in the empire of the Great Mogul. The Seiks, it appeared, gave no obstruction to his march: The Mahrattas, from their internal distractions, were ill prepared to resist him: And, though they assembled a considerable army, which

[1] The announcement was much more than rumour. Letters from Zemaun Shah himself to the British Government, at successive periods, to Sir John Shore and to Mr. Lumsden. Wellesley Despatches, i. 670; Lord Mornington, also, writes to Mr. Dundas, "I have lately received a letter from Zemaun Shah, containing a declaration of his intention to invade Hindustan, and a peremptory demand of the assistance of the Nabob Vizir and of mine, for the purpose of delivering Shah Alem from the hands of the Mahrattas, of restoring him to the throne of Delhi, and of expelling the Mahrattas from their acquisitions on the south-western frontier of India. That the Shah entertains such a design is unquestionable, and whatever may be the result, it is prudent to be on our guard." Despatches, i. 89. There is no doubt that Shah Zemaun seriously purposed the invasion of Hindustan, and that he repeatedly made a demonstration of carrying his purpose into effect. See Elphinstone's Cabul, Appendix, 565. Had he been a prince of vigour and talent, or had his authority been firmly established in his own dominions, the project might have been realized with little difficulty. The march of an effective Afghan force to Delhi would have produced a crisis in Hindustan, of which, although the result might have accelerated the extension of our power, yet the interval would have been a state of great anxiety, exertion, and expense. It was sound policy of the Government, therefore, not only to prepare against, but, if possible, to prevent such an occurrence.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1799. might have enabled them to dispute the possession of Delhi, or molest him in his retreat, it was still possible for him, in the opinion of the person then at the head of the English government, to advance to Delhi, even with so inconsiderable an army as that which he led to Lahore; in which case, he would have formidably threatened the British interests. The Rohillas, it was imagined, would join him; induced, not only by the affinities of descent and religion, and the cruelties which they had sustained at the hands of the English and Vizir; but, the Governor-General added, by the love of war and plunder; yet the truth is, that they devoted themselves to agriculture, whenever oppression would permit them, with an ardour and success, of which India had no example; and their love of war and plunder meant only a greater degree of courage and vigour than distinguished the other races of the country.[1] The approach of the Shah, it was therefore apprehended, would spread the greatest disorders in the dominions of the Vizir. "The troops under Almas," who governed as renter, and defended that half of the dominions of the Vizir which was most exposed to the incursions both of the Mahrattas and Afghans, "were," says the Governor-General, "respectable. The other troops of the Vizir, with little exception, would rather have

[1] The mistake is here repeated of confounding the two races who inhabited the province of Rohilcund, the Hindu indigenous population and the Afghan settlers, to whom the term Rohilla should properly be confined. The former were, no doubt, an industrious and agricultural people; the latter were more especially soldiers—soldiers of fortune, who, upon the occurrence of war and the prospect of plunder, would as certainly have recruited the armies of Zemaun Shah.—W.

proved an incumbrance, than an assistance to the British forces; and nothing but the most urgent remonstrances would have ensured the exertions or supplies of the Vizir. His dominions would have been overrun with marauders; a total temporary stoppage of the collections would have ensued; and these disorders, if not speedily quelled, would have ended in general insurrection." On the measures to be adopted, Sir John Shore found it difficult to decide. The Mahrattas, excited by their fears, made proposals to the English for a union of forces against the Afghan. But the reduction of the power of the Mahrattas, Sir John would have welcomed as one of the most desirable events. On the other hand Zemaun Shah, if crowned with success, would be still a greater object of dread. Again; if the Mahrattas, by their own exertions, prevailed over the Shah, they would gain a formidable increase of power. Or, if the French leader, who, in the name of Sindia, now governed so great a portion of the provinces, at which the Afghans were supposed to aim, should, in the midst of commotion, raise himself to the sovereignty of the territories in dispute, this, to the mind of the Governor-General, appeared the most alarming consequence of all. Before the English government thought itself called upon for any great exertions, a rebellious brother of the Shah excited disturbance in his dominions; and recalled him early in 1797, from Lahore. The troops at the cantonments of Cawnpore and Futty Ghur had, in the mean time, been ordered into camp; and two additional regiments of infantry had been raised. The Governor-General, indeed, imagined,

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

that the march of the Shah to Lahore, with so limited a force, was rather an experiment than the commencement of an expedition; but the question was worthy of his attention whether it would have been easy for the King of the Afghans to come with a greater force. It was, too, after all, the opinion of the English ruler, that, though motives were not wanting to prompt the Shah to the invasion of Hindustan, it was nevertheless an event very little probable; and such as there would be little prudence in taking any costly precautions to defeat.[1]

In 1798, a belief, but solely derived from rumour,[2] of vast preparations making by the Afghan, for the invasion of India, was excited anew. The apprehensions, however, of the British government were allayed, by intelligence received toward the end of September, that the disturbances within the dominions of the Shah had compelled him to leave his capital and march to Kandahar. But this was speedily followed by reports, that the 10th of October was fixed for commencing his march from Kabul towards Hindustan; and though the authenticity of these reports was held very doubtful, the English government deemed it "their duty," according to their own expressions, "to take every precaution against the possibility of an event, which, combined with the designs of Tippoo and the French, might become of the most serious importance." Endeavours were used to

[1] Minute of the Governor-General, 4th of July 1797. See also Malcolm's Sketch, p. 210.

[2] This is a mistake, as shown in a preceding note: the information was positive. See also Minutes of the Governor-General, of August, 1798. Despatches, i. 188.

prevail upon Doulut Rao Sindia to return from the south, and put his dominions in the best posture of defence; and great hopes were expressed, that he would follow this advice. "The Governor-General also directed the Resident at the court of Sindia," I use again the language of the Governor-General in council, "to enter into defensive engagements with that chieftain, upon his return to Hindustan, under such limitations and conditions, as might secure the effectual co-operation of the Mahratta army, with the least possible diversion of the British force from the exclusive protection of the frontier of Oude. His Lordship further directed the resident with Sindia to endeavour to provide the earliest resistance to the progress of the Shah, at the greatest practicable distance from the frontier of Oude, by encouraging the chiefs of the Rajpoots and Seiks to oppose the first approach of the invading army."[1] In the month of October the Commander-in-Chief was directed to prepare for such a disposition of the troops in the upper provinces, and such military operations in general, as would most effectually secure that part of the British frontier against an attack from the Afghans. The proposition of the Commander-in-Chief was approved, for adding to the army two regiments of native infantry, for the movement of five companies of native invalids to Chunar, and of five other companies to Allahabad; and for assembling a force to cover the city of Benares. The resident at Lucknow was desired "to urge to the Vizir," these are the words of the official despatch, "the necessity

[1] Papers, ut supra, ii. 36.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

of collecting as large a body of artillery, infantry, and cavalry, as possible, to be placed, if necessary, under the directions of an European officer, and to be employed in the manner suggested by the Commander-in-Chief:" Also, to take immediate measures for sending such a supply of grain to Allahabad as the commanding officer in the field might prescribe, and for obtaining the orders and assistance of the Vizir in despatching, whenever it should be requisite, all the boats not required for the service of the army.

Notwithstanding the hopes, however, which had been fondly entertained of a defensive alliance with Sindia, the authorities in India write to the authorities in England in the following terms; "From the letter to the resident with Dowlut Rao Sindia, dated the 26th of October, you will observe, that Sindia's continuance at Poonah, the dissensions and disaffection which prevail among his commanders, and the unsettled and precarious state of his authority in Hindustan, have prevented our taking any further steps for carrying the intended arrangements into effect." It was in the beginning of October that the authorities in India delivered it to the authorities in England, as their opinion, that the greatest advantages would arise from a connexion with Sindia: Before the end of the same month, they find the circumstances of Sindia to be such, that no further steps for carrying the intended arrangements into effect are accounted advisable.[1] Again; the inability of Sindia, from the disaffection of his commanders, and the tottering state of his authority, was now made the foundation on which measures of policy were built:

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 36, 37.

1799.

After an interval of not many months, the necessity was urged of draining the whole resources of the British state, to make war upon him. The fact appears to be, that Sindia knew the improbability of being invaded by the Shah; and though such invasion would bring on him greater evils than it would bring on the government of any other state, he chose to remain at Poonah, for the promotion of those objects of which he was there in eager pursuit.

"Under these circumstances," say the authorities in India, "we have judged it expedient to determine, that in the event of Zemaun Shah's approach to the frontier of our ally the Vizir, our military operations shall be confined to a system of defence; and we have resolved that our arms shall, in no case, pass the limits of his Excellency's dominions, unless such a forward movement shall be deemed by the commanding officer necessary for the protection of the frontier, either of Oude, or of our own dominions."[1]

After producing all this preparation and expense, the Shah, who, it seems, had again advanced as far as Lahore, began his retreat on the 4th of January: and Shah Aulum was informed by a letter from the Afghan Vizir, that no intention remained of prosecuting the expedition into Hindustan that year, but the helpless Mogul might look forward to a more prosperous issue, at some future period. The cause of the retreat was reported, and believed, to be, the alarming progress making by the brother of the Shah at the head of a military force in the neighbourhood of Herat.[2]

[1] Papers, ut supra, ii. 37.

[2] Papers, ut supra, p. 38.—M. Shah Mohammed, the brother of Zemaun

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

In the month of September, Mr. Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, had made the following communication to the Governor-General. A personage, of the name of Mehidi Ali Khan, had intimated, that, as he was about to make a journey into Persia, it might be in his power, and if properly authorized, he had confident hopes that it would be in his power, to excite the Persian rulers, by threatening or attacking the western part of Afghanistan, to divert the Shah from his projected invasion of Hindustan. The fact was, that Baba Khan,[1] then King of Persia, had espoused the cause of Mahmood, the brother of Zemaun, as the elder son, and hence the rightful heir of the late monarch: and had already threatened, if not attacked, the province of Khorassan. Mehidi Ali Khan was intrusted with a mission, the objects of which, as they fell in with the existing politics of the Persian government, were successfully attained. This, however, was not enough to satisfy a mind, which longed to do every thing in magnificent style; and the Governor-General prepared a splendid embassy to the court of Baba Khan. Captain Malcolm, who had lately been assistant to the resident at Hy-

Shah by a different mother, who was governor of Herat at the time of his father's death, was left in possession of his government upon his acknowledging Zemaun Shah as his sovereign. He subsequently engaged in repeated insurrections against the king in 1794, 1797, and 1799, and these attempts, although unsuccessful, had the effect of suspending Shah Zemaun's designs upon India, and recalling him from the advance he had made towards their fulfilment. The last rebellion of Mohammed, in 1800, placed him, for a season, on the throne of Kabul. Elphinstone, Append. 575. Conolly's Travels, ii. 262.—W.

[1] Baba Khan was the name of the prince, who upon his accession to the throne of Persia, in 1797, took the title of Futteh Ali Shah, by which designation he is better known. Mohammed was not the rightful heir to the throne of Kabul.

1799.

derabad, was chosen, for his knowledge of the language, and other accomplishments, to conduct the negotiation. "The embassy," to use the words of the negotiator, "was in a style of splendour corresponding to the character of the monarch, and the manners of the nation, to whom it was sent; and to the wealth and power of that state from whom it proceeded:" A language this, which may be commonly interpreted, lavishly, or, which is the same thing, criminally, expensive. The negotiator continues; "It was completely successful in all its objects. The King of Persia was not only induced by the British envoy to renew his attack upon Khorassan, which had the effect of withdrawing Zemaun Shah from his designs upon India; but entered into treaties of political and commercial alliance with the British government."[1] The embassy proceeded from Bombay on the 29th of December, 1799; and the terms of the treaties were fixed before the end of the succeeding year. It was stipulated, That the King of Persia should lay waste, with a great army, the country of the Afghans, if ever they should proceed to the invasion of India, and conclude no peace without engagements binding them to abstain from all aggressions upon the English: That should any army, belonging to the French, attempt to form a settlement on any of the islands or shores of Persia, a force should be employed by the two contracting states to co-operate for their extirpation; and that if even any individuals of the French nation should request permission to reside in Persia, it should not be granted. In

[1] Malcolm's Sketch, p. 317.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1799.

the firmaun, annexed to this treaty, and addressed to the governors and officers in the Persian provinces, it was said; "Should ever any person of the French nation attempt to pass your ports or boundaries; or desire to establish themselves, either on the shores or frontiers, you are to take means to expel and extirpate them, and never to allow them to obtain a footing in any place; and you are at full liberty, and authorized, to disgrace and slay them." Though the atrocious part of this order was, no doubt, the pure offspring of Persian ferocity; yet a Briton may justly feel shame, that the ruling men of his nation, a few years ago, (such was the moral corruption of the time!) could contemplate with pleasure so barbarous and inhuman a mandate, or endure to have thought themselves, except in a case of the very last necessity, its procuring cause. On their part, the English were bound, whenever the King of the Afghans, or any person of the French nation, should make war upon the King of Persia, "to send as many cannon and warlike stores as possible, with necessary apparatus, attendants, and inspectors, and deliver them at one of the ports of Persia."[1] The evil of this condition was, that binding, not merely for a single emergency, it tended to involve the English in all the quarrels between the King of Persia and a neighbouring people, with whom it was very unlikely that he would almost ever be at peace: and thus extended more widely than ever those fighting connexions, which the legislature had not only prohibited, but stigmatized, as contrary at once to the interest and the honour of

[1] See Collection of Treaties, &c. between the East India Company and the Asiatic Powers; also the Appendix to Malcolm's Sketch.

1799.

the nation. The commercial treaty was of slight importance, and aimed at little more than some security from the ill-usage to which in barbarous countries merchants are exposed, and some improvements in the mode of recovering the debts, and securing the property of the English traders. On the attainment of these points, the envoy himself, as natural, sets the highest value. "These treaties," he tells us, "while they completely excluded the French from Persia, gave the English every benefit which they could derive from this connexion." He adds, "Nor can there be a doubt, that if this alliance had been cultivated with the same active spirit of foresight and penetration with which it was commenced, it would have secured the influence of the British government in that quarter from many of those attacks to which it has subsequently been exposed."[1] It would have been good, if the envoy had shown, in what advantage the British government could find a compensation, for the expense of upholding such a connexion at the court of Persia.

The result, in regard to the Afghans, is necessary to be known. The year 1800 was spent, partly in war, partly in negotiation, between the King of Persia and Zemaun Shah. In the year 1801, Mahmood, the rebellious prince, collected such a force, as enabled him not only to defeat his brother, but to render him a captive.[2]

To grant a residence to Vizir Ali, the deposed Nabob or Nawaub of Oude, at a place so near his former dominions as Benares, was not regarded as a

[1] Malcolm's Sketch, p. 318. [2] Papers, ut supra, p. 22, 23.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. measure of prudence, and he had been made acquainted with the resolution of removing him to Calcutta. He viewed the change with the utmost aversion; but all his remonstrances against it had proved in vain; and the time was now approaching, the preparations were even made, for carrying it into execution.

1799.

On the morning of the 14th of January, 1799, he paid a visit, by appointment, accompanied by his usual suite of attendants, to Mr. Cherry, the British Resident, at his house, distant about three miles from Benares. After the usual compliments, he began to speak of the hardship of his coercive removal; and proceeded first to warmth, at last to intemperance of language. Mr. Cherry, whose attentions were understood to have gained his personal favour, is said to have gently attempted to repress his indiscretion, and to remind him that he, at least, was not the proper object of his resentment; when the impetuous youth, with sudden or premeditated frenzy, started from his seat, and made a blow at him with his sword. This, by the law of Eastern manners, was a signal to his attendants, with or without concert; and in an instant their swords were unsheathed. Mr. Cherry endeavoured to escape through a window, but one of the attendants, reaching him with his poignard, struck him lifeless on the floor. Two other gentlemen in the room being murdered, the assassins hurried to the houses of other Englishmen; but, sacrificing only two other lives in their progress, they were so vigorously resisted by a gentleman, who possessed himself of a narrow staircase, and defended himself against their ascent, that

time was given for the arrival of a party of horse; upon which they immediately betook themselves to flight. So little preparation had Vizir Ali made for this explosion, that he was obliged to leave behind him whatever property he possessed; the furniture of his zenana, his elephants, and even a part of his horses. He retired to the woody country of Bhotwal, where he was joined by several disaffected Zemindars.

The news of this outrage excited considerable emotion at Lucknow, where it was regarded as the eruption of a conspiracy for the overthrow of the government; a conspiracy in which it was unknown to what extent the subjects of Saadut Ali might themselves be concerned. That ruler, in whose character timidity predominated, and who knew that he was hated, suspected every body, even his troops, and prayed that the English battalion might be sent from Cawnpore for the protection of his person. When called upon to join with his forces the British army, for the chastisement of the offender, he found an excuse, which his avarice, his timidity, his desire of ease, and hatred of exertion, all combined in leading him eagerly to adopt. He stated his suspicions of his troops, and represented them as too void, both of discipline and of fidelity, for any advantage to be expected from their aid. He afterwards paid dear for his ingenuousness, when this representation was brought forward as a reason for thrusting upon him measures which his soul abhorred.

Notwithstanding the representations of the former Governor-General, Sir John Shore, that the people of Oude universally regarded Vizir Ali as destitute

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

of all title to the crown, the grand alleged fact, upon which he grounded the important decision of deposing a sovereign, and naming his successor; the Marquis Wellesley, in a letter to the Resident, dated the 22nd of January, 1801, expressly says, "Active, and *general*, support has been afforded, by the subjects of his Excellency, to the impostor who lately assumed the name of Vizir Ali."[1] It also appears that of the troops of the Vizir, which were required to assist in reducing the disturber, a part in reality joined his standard.

He found himself in a short time at the head of an army of several thousand men; descended with them into the plains of Gorakpoor, the eastern district of Oude; and threw the whole kingdom into trepidation and alarm. A British force was assembled to oppose him. Some partial rencounters, in which they suffered pretty severely, and the narrow limits for subsistence or plunder to which they were reduced, soon disheartened his followers; when they abandoned him in great numbers; and he himself took refuge with a Rajpoot Rajah. He remained with him till the month of December following; when the Rajpoot made his terms with the British government, and treacherously delivered up Vizir Ali, who was carried to Fort William, and there confined.

In the month of January, 1799, the Governor-General addressed letters to the Vizir, and to the Resident at Lucknow, of which the object was to urge,

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 146.—M. This does not prove that Vizier Ali was popular when Sir J. Shore wrote; the contrary was no doubt the case. It only proves what was uniformly admitted, the unpopularity of Sadut Ali, in consequence of his parsimony and financial exactions.—W.

1799.

what he was pleased to denominate a *reform* of the military establishment of the Vizir. The London authorities themselves, in the letter which they afterwards wrote on the 15th of May, 1799, expressing their great satisfaction with the arrangements in Oude which had been formed by Sir John Shore, and with the disposition shown by the Vizir, both to make the large pecuniary payments which were required at his hands, and to introduce the reforms into his financial system which would alone enable him to meet those demands, alluded to his military expenditure in the following terms: "The large, useless, and expensive military establishment, within the Oude dominions, appears to us to be one of the principal objects of *economical reform,* and we have much satisfaction in finding that the subject has already come under your consideration."[1] In his letter to the Resident the Governor-General says, "My object is, that the Vizir should disband, as speedily as possible, the whole of his military force:" The next part of the plan was to replace that force by an army exclusively British. This was what the Governor-General, with other Englishmen, called a *reform* of the military establishments of the Vizir: the total annihilation of his military power, and the resignation of himself and his country to the army of another state. The Vizir was indeed to retain as many, as might be necessary, of that kind of troops which were employed in collecting the taxes; and as many as might be necessary for the purposes of state: an establishment of the sort which his own aumils, or tax-gatherers, enjoyed.

[1] Papers, ut supra, i. 3.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

The Resident was instructed to avail himself of the alarm into which the timidity of the Vizir had been thrown by the rumours of the expedition of the King of the Afghans, to urge upon him the necessity of a ready concurrence with the Governor-General's views. "You will," says the letter, "remind his Excellency, that his military establishment was represented, by himself, to be not only inadequate to contribute any assistance towards the defence of his dominions; but that, at the moment when the services of the British army were most urgently demanded on his frontier, he required the presence of a part of that force in his capital, for the express purpose of protecting his person and authority against the excesses of his own disaffected and disorderly troops. The inference to be drawn from these events is obviously, that the defence of his Excellency's dominions against foreign attack, as well as their internal tranquillity can only be secured, by a reduction of his own useless, if not dangerous troops, and by a proportionate augmentation of the British force in his pay. I am convinced this measure might be effected with a degree of advantage to his Excellency's finances, little inferior to that which it promises to his military establishments; and that his Excellency might obtain from the Company a force of real efficiency at an expense far below that which he now incurs in maintaining his own army in its present defective condition."

The *Vizir*, says the Governor-General, "might obtain a force:" when the force was to be the Company's, and the Vizir to have no force. In the very same letter, "It is not my intention," says the

Governor-General, "that the British force to be furnished to his Excellency should become a part of his own army. The British force to be substituted in place of that part of his Excellency's army which shall be reduced, will be in every respect the same as the remainder of the Company's troops, and will be relieved from time to time according to the orders of the Governor-General in council."

The negotiations respecting this affair appeared to the Governor-General so important; that he was unwilling to intrust them to the qualifications of the Resident, Mr. Lumsden. Colonel Scott had attracted his confidence and esteem; and he resolved that to him the trust should be consigned. "As I am aware," said he, in the same letter, to the Resident, "that you will require the assistance of some able military officer in the execution of the arrangement proposed, I have requested Sir A. Clarke to dispense with the services of Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, the Adjutant-General, who will be directed to proceed to Lucknow immediately, and to remain there for as long a period as may be necessary to the accomplishment of the objects which I have in view."[1] In consequence of this intimation Mr. Lumsden resigned; and Major Scott was appointed to the office of Resident.

Colonel Scott proceeded to Lucknow in the month of June, bearing a letter from the Commander-in-Chief, executing at that time, in the absence of the Governor-General, the office of Vice-President of the Supreme Council. The Nawaub was desirous

[1] See the Letter, with that to Sir A. Clarke, in papers, ut supra, iii 4—6.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

to postpone, rather than accelerate, all discussion upon a project, of which, although he was not yet acquainted with its particulars, the result, he was sufficiently aware, would be a large reduction of his power: And Colonel Scott appears to have been willing to employ some time in making himself acquainted with the situation of affairs, before he strongly pressed upon the Vizir the annihilation, called the reform, of his military establishment. To the usual causes of disorder and misrule, was at this time added another, in the suspension of the powers of the ministers, or principal organs of government, whom, having been appointed under English authority, the Vizir dared not remove, but from whom he withheld his confidence, and the management of his affairs. A circumstance, too, which peculiarly attracted the attention of the Resident, was the hatred and contempt in which the Nabob himself was held by his subjects. "The information," says he, "which your Lordship has received, of the unpopularity of his Excellency, is probably far short of the real state; as, confined to the court, the only persons who attend the Durbar, excepting the Nawaub's own sons, and occasionally Almas Ali Khan, are a few pensioners, of whom his Excellency, from their known character, entertains no suspicion of engaging in politics; and it has not been without some difficulty that I have prevailed on native gentlemen of respectable connexions to show themselves at the Durbar.—The present state of things, so degrading to the character of the Nawaub, so prejudicial to his own real interests, and to the welfare of his country; and, I may add

—so discreditable to the English name, obviously calls for a radical reform." Major Scott's ideas of "a radical reform," however, were all summed up in these words, "An open, efficient, and respectable administration." Even this, however, he despaired of being able to establish without the immediate interference of the head of the English government. "The evident design of the Nawaub," he declared, "is to temporize and delay, that he may enjoy as long as possible the fruits of the present system of secret agency and intrigue."[1]

On the 8th of September, the Resident writes to the Governor-General, that, as soon after his arrival as practicable, he had presented to the Nawaub Vizir the letter from the Vice-President, on the subject of the military reform; that he had delivered to him a brief outline of the intended plan, and requested to receive his answer as soon as it had received a due degree of his consideration; that after more than twenty days had elapsed, he had requested a communication from the Vizir, who named the third day succeeding the date of the letter he was then writing, to converse with him on the subject.

According to the usual style of oriental politeness, which permits no direct contradiction or negative to be applied to any proposition from an exalted man, the Nawab began by saying, "That the measure proposed was not impracticable, but such as he hoped might be accomplished:" he then ob-

[1] Letter to the Governor-General, dated 7th September, 1799; papers, ut supra, p. 10.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

served, that he himself had, however, a proposition to offer, which he would either communicate to the Governor-General, when he should honour Lucknow with his presence, or to the Resident, if he should be intrusted with the execution of the scheme. He was pressed to disclose the nature of his proposition; but in vain. He said he would call in two days, and dictate to the Resident a memorandum on the subject, to be transmitted to the Governor-General; but this, when it was given, indicated no more, than that "the proposition concerned himself personally, that it connected with his own ease the prosperity of his government, and in its operation could be prejudicial to no person."[1] The removal of the minister was the object at which, by the Resident, he was supposed to aim.

On the 20th of the same month, the Resident held it necessary to explain still further the discoveries which he was enabled to make of the disposition and views of the Vizir. "After attentively studying the character of his Excellency, and acquainting myself, as far as circumstances will allow, with the general tenor of his proceedings, I am led to conclude that whilst he is determined to fulfil, with minute regularity, the peculiar engagements with the Company, his views are directed to the enjoyment of a full authority over his household affairs, hereditary dominions, and subjects, according to the most strict interpretation of the clause of the seventeenth article of the treaty executed at Lucknow.—I have no conception that he aspires, either

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 14.

now or in prospect, to political independence. What he aims at is the independent management of the interior concerns of his dominions, to the exclusion of all interference and inspection on the part of the English government, and to the gradual diminution of its influence over the internal administration of his country." It was only on one account, the cruel and destructive mode in which the country was governed, that the Resident thought the interference of the English government was to be desired, "since the exercise of it," says he, "does not seem to have been intended by the late treaty, and is unequivocally disavowed by several declarations to his predecessor." He had not thought it fitting, except in the way of allusion, to agitate again the subject of the military reforms.[1]

Notwithstanding the right which clearly belonged to the Nawab, of exercising without control the interior government of his country, the Governor-General, by a letter, dated the 26th of September, says, "The present condition of his government appears to preclude you from the information necessary to your first steps in the proposed reforms." This refers to the complaints of the Resident, that the Vizir carried on his administration by secret agents, not by the ostensible ministers; whence it happened that the Resident found no person qualified to give him the information which he required. "I shall hope," continues the Governor-General, "that my applications to the Vizir would remove every difficulty of this nature.—But, if I should be

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 15, 16.

disappointed in this expectation, it will then become necessary for you, in my name, to insist, that the Vizir shall place his government in such a state, as shall afford you the requisite means of information, as well as of carrying the intended regulations into complete and speedy effect." He adds, "The great and immediate object of my solicitude is, to accomplish the reform of his Excellency's military establishment:—and, accordingly, this point must be pressed upon him, with unremitted earnestness. His acquiescence in the measure must, however, be totally unqualified by any conditions not necessarily connected with it."[1]

The Vizir procrastinating both the disclosure of his secret, and compliance with the proposition for the annihilation-reform of his military establishment, the Gôvernor-General addressed him by letter on the 5th of November.[2] "The general considerations which render it extremely necessary and desirable that the arrangement respecting your military establishment should be carried into execution without delay, have already been fully explained to your Excellency, and you have concurred with me in my view of the subject. One argument in favour of a speedy determination on this subject possibly may not have occurred to your mind, and I therefore take this occasion explicitly to state it to your Excellency." This argument was; that the Company were bound by treaties to defend the dominions of his Excellency against all enemies; that his dominions were threatened by Zemaun Shah, and

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 16, 17.

[2] Despatches, ii. 132.

perhaps by others; that "it might not be in the power of the British government, on a sudden emergency, to reinforce the troops in his Excellency's country with sufficient expedition; my firm opinion," continues the Governor-General, "therefore is, that the Company can in no other manner fulfil effectually their engagement to defend your Excellency's dominions, against all enemies, than by maintaining constantly in those dominions such a force as shall at all times be adequate to your effectual protection, independently of any reinforcements which the exigency might otherwise require."[1] This was, in other words, an explicit declaration, that the military force for the protection of Oude ought to be, at all times, even in the bosom of the most profound peace, at the utmost extent of a war-establishment; than which a more monstrous proposition never issued from human organs! As one of the most essential principles of good government consists in reducing the peace-establishment of the military force to its lowest possible terms, and one of the most remarkable principles of bad government consists in upholding it beyond the limits of the most severe necessity; so, few countries can be placed in a situation which less demanded a great peace-establishment, than the kingdom of Oude. On more than one half of all its frontiers, it was defended by the British dominions, or inaccessible mountains. On the other half, it was not supposed in any danger of being attacked, except, either by the King of the Afghans, who was separated from it

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 24, 25.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

by the extent of several large kingdoms; or by the Mahrattas, who were too distracted and weak to be able to defend themselves. A peace-establishment in Oude, at the perpetual extent of a war-establishment, for defence against the Afghans, would be very little more than matched by a proposition for a perpetual war-establishment in England, for fear of an invasion from the Turks.

Coercion was now to be employed; and the plan of it was this: without any further regard to the consent of the sovereign, British troops, to the proposed amount, were to march into the country: the sums required for their maintenance were to be immediately demanded: and the want of ability otherwise to comply with the demand would compel him, it was supposed, to relieve himself from the expense of his own army, by putting an end to its existence.

On what ground of justice was this proceeding built? The Governor-General exhibited an argument: "The seventh article of the treaty, concluded with your Excellency, by Sir John Shore, provides for the *occasional* augmentation of the Company's troops in your Excellency's dominions, in terms which evidently render the Company's government competent to decide at all times on the requisite amount of such augmentation. The same article binds your Excellency to defray the expense of any force which shall be deemed necessary by the Company for your defence."[1] The same argumentation was, by his Lordship's military secretary, repeated, more at length, to the Resident.

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 25.

The treaty, concluded between the English government and the Nawaub, by Sir John Shore, clearly established two points, with regard to the military force to be maintained at the expense of the sovereign of Oude; that there should be a certain regular, permanent establishment; and also, a power of making occasional augmentations. Enough; said the Governor-General, and his instruments; let the occasional augmentations be made the permanent establishment. When this point was settled, all the benefit was attained of arbitrary will; for, as the amount of these augmentations was not specified, it remained with the Governor-General, upon the foundation of a treaty which exactly defined the permanent establishment, to make that permanent establishment any thing which he pleased. Such is the logic of the strong man towards the weak.

Before this letter, written on the 5th of November, could be received by the Resident, and delivered to the Vizir, namely, on the 12th of the same month, the measure of which he had before announced the contemplation, and which he had hitherto preserved a mysterious secret, was disclosed. He had already, on several occasions, given vent to expressions of impatience, in regard to the difficulties of his government, and the inability under which he found himself placed of commanding the respect or obedience of his subjects. These expressions had been so pointed as sometimes to raise in the mind of the Resident a conjecture, that he was meditating a plan of retreat from the burdens of government. But at the same time, regulations of state were projected, buildings were planned, household arrangements were formed,

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1799.

and other things went on, so much in unison with views of permanency, that the Resident would not encourage the conjecture which sometimes presented itself to his mind. Having appointed the morning of the 12th, to meet with him on business of importance, the Vizir, says the Resident, "began by observing that he had frequently declared to me the impossibility of his conducting the affairs of his country, under existing circumstances; that probably I had not comprehended the full drift of these expressions, or conceived they were uttered in a moment of ill-humour; that the real meaning of them was an earnest desire to relinquish a government which he could not manage with satisfaction to himself, or advantage to his subjects." He added, in the course of the conversation, "That his mind was not disposed to the cares and fatigues of government; that as one of his sons would be raised to the musnud, his name would remain; and that he was possessed of money sufficient for his support, and the gratification of all his desires in a private station." In a second conversation, on the morning of the 14th, the Vizir entered into some further explanation of the motives which impelled him to the design of abdication, which "consisted," says the resident, "in general accusations against the refractory and perverse disposition of the people at large; of complaints of the want of fidelity and zeal in the men immediately about his person; of the arrogance of some of the aumils, and of the open disobedience of others.

"Whatever pleasure," says the Resident, "this exposure of his intentions afforded to myself, and whatever eventual benefits I foresaw to the interests

of the two states, from the execution of them, I thought it my duty to expostulate with his Excellency, on so extraordinary a resolution, by such arguments as occurred to me on the occasion. I replied, that the remedy to this aggregate of evils was easy, and within his own power; that a strong and just administration would ensure the obedience of the bulk of his subjects on the firm principle of attachment to his person and government; that a conciliatory and encouraging conduct on his part would secure fidelity and enliven zeal; that the reform of the military establishment was the specific measure that would curb the arrogance of the aumils; and in conclusion I pledged myself, if his Excellency would reject the advice of interested favourites, and be guided by the impartial and friendly counsel which your Lordship would convey to him through me, that the affairs of his government could be conducted with ease to himself, to the acquisition of a high reputation, and to the prosperity and happiness of his subjects."

To a question in regard to the military reform, the Vizir replied, that, under his determination of resigning the government, all discussion of that subject was useless. In this opinion the Resident acquiesced; and he deemed it, for the present, inexpedient to produce the Governor-General's letter of the 5th. With respect to the treasures and jewels left by the late Nawaub, he desired instruction; as from the expressions of the Vizir, and his character for avarice, he thought it was probably his intention to carry them along with him to the place of his retreat.[1]

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 27—31.

The pleasure, which the Resident expressed, at the prospect of the Nabob's abdication, was faint, compared with the eagerness of the Governor-General in grasping at the prey. "I am directed," says the military secretary, under date of the 21st of the same month, "by the Right Honourable the Governor-General, to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 12th and 14th instant.

"His Lordship is preparing detailed instructions to you, for the regulation of your conduct under the delicate and important circumstances stated in those letters. In the mean time he has directed me to communicate to you his sentiments on such parts of your despatch of the 12th instant, as appear to his Lordship to require immediate notice.

"The proposition of the Vizir is pregnant with such benefit, not only to the Company, but to the inhabitants of Oude, that his Lordship thinks it cannot be too much encouraged; and that there are no circumstances which shall be allowed to impede the accomplishment of the grand object which it leads to. This object his Lordship considers to be the acquisition by the Company of the exclusive authority, civil and military, over the dominions of Oude.

"His Lordship does not consider the formal abdication of the sovereignty by the Vizir to be necessary to this end. On the contrary, he apprehends, that step, by necessarily raising a question with regard to the succession, would involve us in some embarrassment. His Lordship is rather of opinion, therefore, that the mode of proceeding on the proposition of the Vizir, must be, by a secret treaty with his Ex-

cellency; which shall stipulate, on his part, that, from and after a period, to be appointed by this government, the complete authority, civil and military, of the dominions of Oude shall vest in, and be exercised by, and in the name of the Company.

"In this treaty his Lordship proposes, that the sons of the Vizir shall be no further mentioned than may be necessary for the purpose of securing to them a suitable provision.

"With respect to what you have stated, relative to the wealth of the state, if the arrangement in the contemplation of the Governor-General should be agreed to by the Vizir, his Lordship will feel but little difficulty in allowing his Excellency to appropriate it to his own use, stipulating only on behalf of the Company, that all arrears of subsidy, or of whatever description, due to the Company, shall be previously discharged in full by his Excelleney."[1]

In conformity with these ideas, the draught of a treaty was speedily prepared, and sent to the Resident, accompanied by notes for a memorial explanatory of the grounds of the several articles. The ardour of the Governor-General embraced the object as accomplished, or sure of its accomplishment. In pursuance of orders, the Commander of the troops in Oude delivered in, what was entitled, a "Memoir of the precautionary movements, and distribution of the Company's troops, for the purpose of establishing the exclusive control and authority of the Company over the dominions of Oude."[2]

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 31, 32.

[2] Ibid. p. 40—48.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1799.

In the transmission of intelligence, receipt of instructions, and other preparatives, time was spent till the 15th of December; on which day, the plan of the Governor-General, in relation to the measure of abdication, was communicated for the first time to the Vizir, in the matured form of the draught of a treaty. After remarking upon the calmness with which the Vizir perused the treaty, and his observations upon some inferior points, "His Excellency," the Resident says, "who had not thoroughly comprehended the extent of the first article, asked what meaning I annexed to it. Referring him to the article itself, I replied, that it vested the whole administration of the country in the hands of the English Company. He then asked, what portion of authority was to remain with his successor; to which I replied that the plan did not provide for a successor. His Excellency continued his inquiries, by asking, whether a family which had been established for a number of years, was to abandon the sovereignty of its hereditary dominions? I replied that your Lordship's justice and liberality had made an ample provision for the comfort and independence of that family; and briefly explained the consideration which had induced your Lordship to stipulate, that his Excellency should commit the sole and exclusive administration of Oude to the Company in perpetuity." From this conversation, the Resident adds, "I can hardly venture to draw any conclusion: And shall, therefore, only observe, that though his Excellency is perfectly master of concealing his passions, yet, if he had entertained an immoveable repugnance to the basis of the treaty, he could scarcely have

disguised it under smiles, and an unaltered countenance."[1]

A paper drawn up at the request of the Vizir by the Resident and afterwards altered by the Vizir to a correspondence with his own feelings, was transmitted to the Governor-General, as the authentic enunciation of his design of abdication.[2] In answer to this, a very long paper, dated the 16th of December, was received from the Governor-General. The purpose of this document was to corroborate the ideas on which, in the mind of the Vizir, the plan of abdication was supposed to be founded; and to convince him of the impossibility of reconciling his design with the appointment of a successor, or any other scheme than that of transferring the undivided sovereignty of the country to the English.[3]

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 53.

[2] It was a memorandum of the result of the conversation held with the Resident, drawn up in Persian, and approved of, with some corrections, by the Vizier. Dispatches, ii. 152.—W.

[3] This is a very unfair view of the scope of the document in question, the main tendency of which was to deter Sadut Ali from carrying his intentions into effect. It states frankly and undeniably the difficulties by which his abdication would be followed, and shows that they could only be met by the assumption of the whole power by the British Government. But it also explicitly states, that if he should abdicate, he must not expect to take with him the whole of his accumulated wealth, but that he must discharge all arrears due by the Government of Oude, and leave a sufficiency of supply for the immediate wants of his successor. It must have been quite certain that this would put an end to the project. Sadut Ali's ruling passion was avarice; he loved power only as the means of amassing wealth; for any other purpose he detested it. His habits were those of a private individual, not a prince; and the trouble and responsibility of his high station deprived it of all its attractions. There can be little doubt that he was in earnest in wishing to resign his principality if he could have enjoyed his treasures in security and retained the show of authority over a successor of his own nomination. The line of argument adopted by Lord Wellesley was most of all calculated to deter him from the execution of his design. In the dispatches published there is no indication of that

BOOK VI
CHAP. 9.

1799.

On the 19th of December the Resident again wrote: "After my departure from the Nawaub Vizir, on the 15th instant, his Excellency either really was, or pretended to be, so much affected by the conversation, that he could not conceal the perturbation of his mind, which he betrayed, by forbidding the customary visits, and by refraining to transact any of the ordinary business. Although there is no reason to suspect that he has disclosed the cause of his uneasiness; yet this conduct so indiscreet, so unmanly, necessarily occasioned much talk and speculation amongst his own dependants, and the inhabitants of the city.

"His Excellency, on the 17th, informed me of his intention to breakfast with me on the following morning; but at ten o'clock sent a message, that having been in the sun, his eyes were so much affected by a disorder he is liable to, that he could not fulfil his engagement that day, but would call upon me this morning. He accordingly came, and when entered into a private apartment, opened the conversation by observing, that in the paper transmitted to your Lordship, he had adverted to certain circumstances and causes, under the existence of which he found it impossible to conduct the affairs of his govern-

delight at his proposal, either on the part of the Resident or the Governor, which is described in the text. In his letter to the Court of Directors, informing them of the circumstance, he announces what no statesman will be inclined to censure his intention to profit by the event to the utmost practicable extent, and adds, "I entertain a confident hope of being able either to establish, with the consent of the Vizier, the sole and exclusive authority of the Company within the province of Oude and its dependencies, or, at least, to place our interests there on an improved and durable foundation." Dispatches, ii. 186.—W.

ment; and that he entertained the hope that your Lordship would have called upon him for an explanation of those circumstances and causes.

"His Excellency proceeded, that the proposition offered by your Lordship was so repugnant to his feelings; departed so widely, in a most essential point, from the principle on which he wished to relinquish the government; and would, were he to accept it, bring upon him such indelible disgrace and odium, that he could never voluntarily subscribe to it. The sovereignty, he added, of these dominions, had been in the family near an hundred years; and the transfer of it to the Company, under the stipulations proposed by your Lordship, would, in fact, be a sale of it for money and jewels; that every sentiment of respect for the name of his ancestors, and every consideration for his posterity, combined to preclude him from assenting to so great a sacrifice, for the attainment of his personal ease and advantage. His Excellency concluded; that the power and strength of the Company placed every thing at your Lordship's disposal.

"Upon stating to his Excellency all the arguments suggested by your Lordship against the nomination of a successor, his Excellency replied; that under your Lordship's determination not to consent to that part of his proposition, he was ready to abandon his design of retirement, and to retain the charge of the government."

If this resolution was adopted, the Resident called to his recollection, the reform of his military establishment, the accomplishment of which would be immediately enforced. "I must here," says the

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1799.

letter of the Resident, "beg leave to call your Lordship's particular attention to his reply on this point; as tending to discover his real sentiments; and perhaps the true meaning of the words 'certain causes,' so repeatedly dwelt upon, and so industriously concealed. His Excellency observed, that the reform of his military establishment upon the principles proposed by your Lordship, would annihilate his authority in his own dominions."[1]

Intelligence of these declarations on the part of the Vizir appears to have disappointed and provoked the Governor-General in no ordinary degree. On the 27th of December the Secretary writes; "My dear Scott, I am directed by Lord Mornington to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant to his Lordship's address. His Lordship is extremely disgusted at the duplicity and insincerity which mark the conduct of the Nabob Vizir on the present occasion; and cannot but strongly suspect, that his Excellency's principal, if not sole, view in the late transaction, has been to ward off the reform of his military establishment, until the advanced period of the season should render it impracticable, at least during the present year."[2] And in the letter of the Governor-General to the home authorities, dated the 25th of January, 1800, he says, "I am concerned to inform your honourable Committee that I have every reason to believe, that the proposition of the Nabob Vizir to abdicate the sovereignty of his dominions (a copy of which was transmitted

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 62.

[2] Ibid. p. 67.

with my separate letter of the 28th of November) was illusory from the commencement, and designed to defeat, by artificial delays, the proposed reform of his Excellency's military establishments."[1]

The truth is, that the vivacity of the Governor-General in the pursuit of his object was far too great. Had the sincerity of the Vizir been ever so indisputable, it was one thing to abdicate in favour of his son; a very different thing to abdicate in favour of the East India Company; and from a proposition to this effect, presented nakedly and impetuously, as that was of the Governor-General, it ought to have been expected that he would revolt. At the same time, it might have been regarded as probable, that if the externals of royalty were left to his son, he would be induced to dispense with the substantials. The Governor-General should have gone to Lucknow himself, when the imposing presence of his authority would have forcibly wrought upon a mind so timid, and accustomed to shrink before superior power, as that of the Vizir. The Governor-General, too, had so lately recognised the policy of setting up the shadow of a sovereign,[2] that the eagerness is the more remarkable, with which in this case he strove to escape from it. When the substance had been held for a time, it would have been easy to deal with the shadow, as experience might direct.

Disappointed in his eager expectation, and piqued at the idea of having been duped, the Governor-General resolved to proceed in his plan for the military

[1] Papers, ut supra, v. 4.

[2] Vide supra, p. 162, (viz. the case of Mysore.)

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1800.

reform without a moment's delay. The reason for hurry was the greater, because the season approached, when additional inconvenience would attend the movement of the troops. "The Resident," says the Governor-General himself, in another letter to the home authorities,[1] "was directed immediately, either from himself, or in concert with the commanding officer at Cawnpore, as the nature of the case might appear to him to require, to direct the several corps to move to such points of his Excellency's dominions, as might appear most advisable; giving due notice to his Excellency of the entrance of the augmentation of the troops into his territories, and calling upon his Excellency to adopt the requisite measures for the regular payment of the additional force."

On the 4th of January, 1800, "I informed," says the Resident, "his Excellency, that the first division of the troops, intended by your Lordship to augment the force in Oude, as stated in the paper which I had presented to him, was now in a situation immediately to enter his Excellency's dominions; and that I was anxious to advise with him on their destination. He entreated that no steps might be taken for their actual march into his dominions, until I had seen and reflected upon the sentiments which he was then employed in committing to paper, and upon some propositions he had to offer. I assured him it was totally impossible to delay the march of the troops; but that, as it would require a day or two to arrange a place for their distribution, if his Excellency would, in that space, come

[1] Dated the 31st of August, 1800; papers, ut supra, v. 10.

forward, in an unreserved manner, with any specific propositions, I should be enabled to judge what weight to allow them, and how far they would authorize me to suspend the progress of the corps. His Excellency having observed that his assent had not yet been given to the augmentation of the troops, I explained to him the principle on which your Lordship's determination was founded. To which he replied, that, if the measure was to be carried into execution, whether with or without his approbation, there was no occasion for consulting him." To this last observation the Resident found it not convenient to make any answer, and immediately diverted the discourse to another point of the subject.[1]

On the 15th of January, the Nabob communicated to the Resident a paper, in which he thus addressed him: "You, Sir, well know, that the proposed plan never, in any measure, met with my approbation or acceptance; and that, in the whole course of my correspondence with the Governor-General, on this subject, not one of my letters contains my acquiescence to the said plan."

He says again, "It may fairly be concluded from Lord Mornington's letters, that arrangements for the additional troops were not to take effect, until funds should be provided for their support, by the dismission of my battalions. Nothing having as yet been agreed upon, respecting the disbanding of the latter, and the additional Company's troops being on their march, whence are the funds to be

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 73.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1800.

derived for their payment? Their sudden approach, too, leaves no time to form arrangements for them."

"Notwithstanding," says he, "I am well assured that, in consequence of the measure, thousands of people will be deprived of their subsistence; and that, by the disbanding of my troops, serious commotions and alarms will take place in the capital (for which reason I give previous warning of its mischievous effects), yet, dreading his Lordship's displeasure, and with the sole view of pleasing him, I am compelled to grant my assent to the introduction of the plan."

He then proceeds to enumerate certain things, which he still desired, as conditions under which the measure, if unavoidable, might take its effect. The first was, that the augmentation of the troops should not be carried beyond the extent of his means. Another was, that the additional force should be kept in one body, and permanently stationed in one place, which should render it more efficient against Zemaun Shah, and other enemies, defence against whom was its only pretext. A further condition was, that the English commander should not interfere with the collection of the revenue. After several other propositions of minor importance, he said, "From the kindness of the Sircar of the Company I am led to expect, that, having, in the present instance, in order to avoid the Governor-General's displeasure, given my consent to the introduction, as far as possible, of the plan, I shall not in future be troubled with fresh propositions."[1]

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii, 77, 78.

On the 18th, a paper or memorial, the draught of which had been communicated to the Resident on the 11th, was despatched by the Vizir to the Governor-General. He began by adverting to the length of time his ancestors had enjoyed the unlimited sovereignty of these provinces. He described the dangers which had threatened the government of his brother, as well from foreign foes, as the disaffection of his troops. "Notwithstanding," said he, "these circumstances, it never once entered the imagination of the British rulers to introduce such innovations, and carry into effect such arrangements, as those now suggested by your Lordship." He then described how completely he was the creature and dependant of the Company, and said, "it was in all ages and countries the practice of powerful and liberal sovereigns to spare neither expense nor trouble in assisting those whom they have once taken under their protection. Should the Company," said he, "no longer putting confidence in the sincerity of my friendship, deprive me of the direction of my own army, and spread their troops over my dominions, my authority in the provinces would be annihilated; nor would my orders be attended to on any occasion, whether trifling or momentous. Making myself, however, sure," he adds, "that it never can have been your Lordship's intention, or conformable to your wish, to distrust, degrade me, or lessen my authority in these dominions, I shall without ceremony disclose to your Lordship my unfeigned sentiments and wishes." And he then proceeds to remonstrate against the measure by a train of reasoning, not unskilfully conceived. "By

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1800.

a reference," said he, "to the second article of the treaty, it will be evident to your Lordship, that on my accession to the musnud, the force designed for the defence of these dominions was increased beyond what it had been in any former period; whilst on my part I agreed to defray the expense of the said augmentation. But in no part of the said article is it written or hinted, that, after the lapse of a certain number of years, a further permanent augmentation should take place. And to deviate in any degree from the said treaty appears to be unnecessary.—From an inspection of the 7th article, we learn, that, after the conclusion of the treaty in question, no further augmentation is to be made, excepting in cases of necessity; and that the increase is to be proportioned to the emergency, and endure but as long as the necessity exists. An augmentation of the troops, without existing necessity, and making me answerable for the expense attending the increase, is inconsistent with treaty; and seems inexpedient.—Towards the latter end of the 17th article, it is stipulated, 'that all transactions between the two states shall be carried on with the greatest cordiality and harmony, and that the Nawab shall possess full authority over his household affairs, hereditary dominions, his troops, and his subjects.' Should the management of the army be taken from under my direction, I ask where is my authority over my household affairs, hereditary dominions, over my troops, and over my subjects?—From the above considerations, and from the magnanimity of the Sircar of the English Company, I am induced to expect from your Lordship's kindness, that, putting

the fullest trust and confidence in my friendship and attachment on every occasion, you will, in conformity to the treaty, leave me in possession of the full authority over my dominions, army, and subjects.—The fame of the Company will, by these means, be diffused over the face of the earth; and, my reputation increasing, I shall continue to offer up prayers for the prosperity of the Company."[1]

This remonstrance, which it was impossible to answer, the Governor-General found, in the forms of ceremony, a pretext for treating as an insult; and for not answering it. The following communication, signed by the secretary, was forwarded by express to the Resident. "Your letter of the 18th instant, with its several enclosures, has been received by the Right Honourable the Governor-General.—His Lordship, not thinking proper to receive, in its present form the written communication made to you by the Nabob Vizir on the 11th instant, as an answer to his Lordship's letter of the 5th November last to his Excellency—directs, that you lose no time in returning the original of that communication to his Excellency, accompanying the delivery of it with the following observations, in the name of the Governor-General:—The mode adopted in the present instance by his Excellency of replying to a public letter from the Governor-General, attested by his Lordship's seal and signature, and written on a subject of the most momentary concern to the mutual interests of the Company and of his Excellency, besides indicating a levity totally unsuitable

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 87, 88.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1800.

to the occasion, is highly deficient in the respect due from his Excellency to the first British authority in India:—His Lordship, therefore, declines making any remarks on the paper which you have transmitted, and desires that the Nabob Vizir may be called on to reply to his Lordship's letter of the 5th November, in the manner prescribed no less by reason than by established usage; if, in formally answering his Lordship's letter, his Excellency should think proper to impeach the honour and justice of the British government, in similar terms to those employed in the paper delivered to you on the 11th instant, the Governor-General will then consider, how such unfounded calumnies, and gross misrepresentations both of facts and arguments, deserve to be noticed." This was language to a legitimate hereditary sovereign. The course of procedure is worthy of notice. A party to a treaty fulfils all its conditions with a punctuality, which, in his place, was altogether unexampled: a gross infringement of that treaty, or at least what appears to him a gross infringement, is about to be committed on the other side: he points out clearly, but in the most humble language, savouring of abjectness, much more than disrespect, the inconsistency which appears to him to exist between the treaty and the conduct: this is represented by the other party as an impeachment of their honour and justice; and if no guilt existed before to form a ground for punishing the party who declines compliance with their will, a guilt is now contracted which hardly any punishment can expiate. This, it is evident, is a course, by which no infringement of

a treaty can ever be destitute of a justification. If the party injured submits without a word; his consent is alleged. If he complains; he is treated as impeaching the honour and justice of his superior; a crime of so prodigious a magnitude, as to set the superior above all obligation to such a worthless connexion.

But this is not the whole of the message which the Resident was commanded to deliver, in the name of the Governor-General, to the Vizir: "The Governor-General further directs, that you peremptorily insist on the Nabob Vizir furnishing a detailed answer to the paper transmitted by his Lordship on the 16th December last, for his Excellency's information and consideration; and that such answer be duly attested by his Excellency's signature, in the same manner as his Lordship's paper was formally attested by the signature of his Lordship: his Excellency's early compliance with this demand is equally due to the dignity of this government, and to the candour of its proceedings; in consequence of his Excellency's own spontaneous proposal to abdicate the sovereignty of his dominions; if his Lordship's manner of receiving and answering that extraordinary proposition of the Vizir appears in any degree objectionable to his Excellency, it behoves his Excellency clearly to state his objections, in the most formal and authentic mode; otherwise the Governor-General must, and will conclude, that his Excellency's original proposition was purposely illusory; and it will become his Lordship's duty to treat it accordingly, as an unworthy attempt to deceive the British government:—In all the trans-

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1800.

actions of his Lordship's government, since his ar rival in India, he has pursued a plain and direct course; and he is determined to adhere to the same invariable system of just and honourable policy, nor will he be diverted from the system, by any machination of artifice, duplicity, or treachery, which may be opposed to him: he has already found the advantage of this course in frustrating the projects of the enemies of Great Britain in India: and he is satisfied that it will prove equally efficacious in confirming the faith of his allies." The earnestness with which the Governor-General desired that this message should be delivered with unimpaired vigour to the Nawab, is visible in the immediately succeeding paragraph of the same letter: "A copy of the foregoing observations, in Persian, attested by the signature of the Governor-General himself, will be forwarded to you by the Persian translator: and his Lordship directs that you communicate the same to the Nabob Vizir, either in case you should have any reason to suppose that his Excellency is likely to entertain the smallest doubt of your being, not only authorized, but commanded by his Lordship, to convey to his Excellency the message contained in the preceding paragraphs, as nearly as possible in the terms in which they are expressed; or in the event of your thinking that the document, attested by his Lordship's signature, will be more impressive than the verbal mode of communication."[1]

On the 20th and the 28th of January, the Resident complained to the Governor-General, that the Vizir,

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 89

instead of giving his cordial assistance, in carrying into execution the measure of annihilating his army, was rather placing impediments in the way; by insisting that the English additional force should not be dispersed in small bodies over the country; by withholding the statement which had been required of the amount and distribution of his own battalions; and by delaying to issue the perwannahs, necessary to ensure provisions to the additional troops. With regard to the last article, the Resident, however, issued his own orders; and such was the state of the government, that they were punctually obeyed.[1]

The Resident deferred the message to the Vizir, till the Persian translation arrived. "Having received," says he, "on the 28th, in the evening, the translation in Persian of your Lordship's message to the Nawaub Vizir I waited upon his Excellency on the 29th in the afternoon, and, in obedience to your Lordship's commands, returned to him, in the most formal manner, the original draught of his proposed letter to your Lordship, accompanied with the paper of observations. His Excellency discovered considerable agitation in the persual of the paper; and he expressed very poignant regret, at having unintentionally, as he affirmed, drawn upon himself such solemn animadversions from your Lordship.—It would, his Excellency observed, be the extreme of ingratitude and folly, wantonly to provoke the displeasure of that power, on which alone he relied, for the preservation of his honour, and the support of

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 89, 90.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1800.

his authority. He attempted to apologize for the paper, by saying, that he meant it merely as a representation of arguments which might be produced, and not as a formal declaration of his own sentiments, and on that account had adopted the mode which your Lordship had viewed in so exceptionable a light.—In respect to the neglect in replying to the paper which had been submitted by your Lordship for his information and consideration, his Excellency assured me, that it arose from his inability to pursue, and reply, in detail, to the extensive train of reasoning which your Lordship had employed; and that he hoped your Lordship would have received the verbal communication, made through me, of the impossibility of his acceding to your Lordship's recommendation, as a full, and respectful answer.—His Excellency asked, for what purpose, or to what avail, could the attempt be, to deceive your Lordship by illusory propositions?"[1]

The intelligence from the Resident, that opposition rather than assistance was given by the Vizir to the execution of a measure of which he so highly disapproved, produced a long letter of violent animadversions from the Governor-General, in which he told the harassed and trembling Vizir, "the means which your Excellency has employed to delay, and ultimately to frustrate, the execution of the above-mentioned plan, are calculated to degrade your character, to destroy all confidence between your Excellency and the British government, to produce confusion and disorder in your dominions, and to

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 91, 92.

[2] Dated 9th February 1800. Despatches, ii. 208.—W.

injure the most important interests of the Company, to such a degree, as may be deemed nearly equivalent to positive hostility on your part."—" The conduct of your Excellency, in this instance," he afterwards adds, " is of a nature so unequivocally hostile, and may prove so injurious to every interest, both of your Excellency and of the Company, that your perseverance in so dangerous a course will leave me no other alternative, than that of considering all amicable engagements between the Company and your Excellency to be dissolved."—This was most distinctly to declare, that if he did not immediately comply, the Governor-General would make war upon him. And since this was the motive depended upon, in truth, from the beginning, would not the direct and manly course have answered the main purpose equally well, and all other purposes a great deal better? We are the masters; such is our will: nothing short of strict and prompt obedience will be endured.

So ardent were the desires of the Governor-General, and so much was he accustomed to assume every thing on which his conclusions depended, that he maintained, in this letter, to the face of the Vizir, that of the plan for annihilating his army, the Vizir had, " after full deliberation, expressed his entire approbation."[1]

Before the end of February, the Vizir felt convinced, that compliance could not be evaded. The money demanded on account of the additional forces was paid; and orders were issued for commencing

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 96—101.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1801.

the discharge of his own battalions. The business of dismissing the troops occupied a considerable time; and was retarded by the necessity of employing a portion of them in collecting the taxes which then were due. It was a matter of considerable delicacy, to avoid commotion, and the demand for bloodshed, where so many armed men were about to be deprived of their accustomed means of subsistence. The business was conducted in a manner highly creditable to the ability as well as the feelings of the gentlemen upon whom it devolved. It was the disposition, and the principle of the Governor-General, to treat with generosity the individuals upon whom the measures of his government might heavily press. As considerable arrears were always due to native troops, and seldom fully paid, the complete discharge of arrears, on which the English government insisted, was a powerful instrument of conciliation. When dissatisfaction any where appeared, every effort was employed to correct misapprehension; patience was exercised; the means of coercion were rather exhibited, than used; pardon was liberally extended, even where resistance had been overcome; and before the end of the year, the measure was in a great part carried into effect without bloodshed or commotion.[1]

In the month of November, 1800, when demand for a second body of new troops was presented to the Vizir, he complained, by letter, to the Resident, in the following terms: "The state of the collections of the country is not unknown to you: You know with

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 110—140, containing the correspondence on the disbanding of the troops.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 9.

1801.

what difficulties and exertions they are realized, and hence I feel a great degree of solicitude and apprehension, lest, if I should fail at a season of exigency, my responsibility should be impeached: I therefore wrote to you, that, until I was secure of resources to answer the demands, I could not become responsible: Accordingly, Jye Sookh Roy has been directed to prepare a statement of the condition of the country, with respect to its resources: You shall be informed when it is ready; and you can then come and inspect it; and, in concert, devise resources for the additional demands, according to the assets; and I will act accordingly." In another part of the same letter, he said, "Formerly, in the plan proposed for the reform of the military, it was written, 'That the resources for the expense of the new troops would be found in the reduction of those of his Excellency:' Although the resources for the payment of the new British troops were not found in the reduction of those of the Sircar; now that you write, to have the charges of other new troops added to the debit of the state, when the reduction of the military has not yet supplied resources for the payment of the charges of the former new troops, how can I take upon myself to defray the charges of these new troops, without subjecting the Sircar to the imputation of a breach of faith."[1]

Of these complaints the Governor-General rapidly availed himself to found on them pretensions of a new description. "If," said he, in a letter to the resident, dated 22nd of January, 1801, "the alarming crisis be now approaching, in which his Excel-

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 141.—M. Dispatches, ii. 422.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1801.

lency can no longer fulfil his public engagements to the Company, this calamity must be imputed principally to his neglect of my repeated advice and earnest representations. The augmented charges might have been amply provided for, if his Excellency had vigorously and cordially co-operated with me, in the salutary and economical measure of disbanding his own undisciplined troops. It is now become the duty of the British government, to interpose effectually, for the protection of his interests, as well as those of the Company, which are menaced with common and speedy destruction, by the rapid decline of the general resources of his Excellency's dominions." It may be observed, as we go on, that if the prompt disbanding of the forces of the Vizir would disengage a revenue perfectly equal, and more than equal, as had all along been confidently affirmed, to the charge created by the additional force, the delay which the reluctance of the Vizir occasioned, and which was now overcome, could only occasion a temporary embarrassment; and that menace of common and speedy destruction, of which the Governor-General so tragically spoke, had no existence: Or, that, on the other hand, if the menace of destruction was real, the pretence of finding, in the discharge of the Vizir's battalions, an ample resource for the new impositions, was void of foundation. The letter goes on, "The Vizir is already apprized, that I have long lamented the various defects of the system by which the affairs of his Excellency's government are administered. Conscious of the same defects, his Excellency has repeatedly expressed a wish to correct them by the assistance of the British government. The

continuance of the present system will exhaust the country to such a degree, as to preclude the possibility of realizing the subsidy. In place of inveterate and growing abuses must be substituted a wise and benevolent plan of government, calculated to inspire the people with confidence in the security of property and of life; to encourage industry; and establish order and submission to the just authority of the state, on the solid foundations of gratitude for benefits received, and expectation of continued security." The Governor-General here establishes the *goodness* of government, "as the solid foundation of submission to its authority." He would not add, what was equally true, that there ought to be no submission without it.

The following passage of the letter deserves profound regard. "Having," continues the Governor-General, "maturely considered these circumstances, with the attention and deliberation which the importance of the subject requires, I am satisfied that no effectual security can be provided, against the ruin of the province of Oude, until the exclusive management of the civil and military government of that Country shall be transferred to the Company, under suitable provisions for the maintenance of his Excellency and of his family. No other remedy can effect any considerable improvement in the resources of the state, or can ultimately secure its external safety, and internal peace."

If this was the only plan which could avert from the state every species of calamity; absolute master, as he was, of the fate of the country, why did the

BOOK VI. CHAP. 9.

1801.

Governor-General hesitate a moment to carry it into execution?

He resolved to offer this proposition to the Vizir in the form of a treaty: but added, "Should his Excellency unfortunately be persuaded, by the interested counsel of evil advisers, absolutely to reject the proposed treaty, you will then proceed to inform his Excellency, in firm, but respectful language, that the funds for the regular payment of the subsidy, to the full extent of the augmented force, must be placed, without a moment of delay, beyond the hazard of failure.—For this purpose, you will require his Excellency to make a cession to the Company, in perpetual sovereignty, of such a portion of his territories, as shall be fully adequate, in their present impoverished condition, to defray those indispensable charges." In selecting the portions to be demanded, the object was, to insulate the Vizir, as well for the purpose of precluding him from foreign connexions, as of defending him from foreign dangers. To this end choice was made of the Doab, and Rohilcund, in the first instance, with the addition of Azim Ghur, and even Gorukpoor, if the revenue of the former country should prove inadequate.[1] A letter to the same purport, and nearly in the same words, was, at the same time, written by the Governor-General to the Vizir.[2] It closes with the following terms: "I request your Excellency to be satisfied, that the whole course of events in Oude, since your accession, has rendered it my indispensable duty to adhere with firmness to the

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 145—148.

[2] Ibid. p. 148—151.—M. Dispatches, ii. 429.—W.

tenor of this letter, as containing principles from which the British government never can depart; nor can your Excellency receive with surprise, or concern, a resolution naturally resulting from your own reiterated representations of the confusion of your affairs, and of your inability either to reduce them to order, or to conciliate the alienated affections of your discontented people." The corollary from these deductions most necessarily, and most obviously is, that any sovereign, who governs ill, and loses the affections of his people, ought to abdicate, or to be compelled to abdicate, the sovereignty of his dominions. We shall see how energetic and persevering an apostle of this doctrine the Governor-General became.

The subsidy which, according to the treaty of Lord Teignmouth, was already paid by the Vizir, amounted to Rs. 76,00,000: the annual expense of the additional force with which he was to be loaded, was 54,12,929: the whole would amount to 1,30,12,929 rupees. The Nawaub was required to make a cession of territory, in perpetual sovereignty to the English, the revenue of which, even in its present unproductive state, and without any regard to the improvements of which it might be susceptible, should amount to such a sum, over and above the whole expense of collection. The revenue remaining to the Vizir after such a deduction would have been 1,00,00,000.[1] The territory, then, of which he was to be deprived, amounted to more than one half, to not much less than two thirds, of his whole dominions.

The address of the Governor-General to the Vizir

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. p. 161—208.

was presented to that prince on the 16th of February, and the first conversation on the subject between him and the Resident was on the 26th. "His Excellency's conversation on that day," says the Resident, "though it did not amount to a positive rejection of the first proposition, discovered an unreserved repugnance to the acceptance of it." Before this letter, however, dated on the 6th of March, was closed, a letter addressed to the Governor-General was received from the Vizir.[1] His complaints respecting the want of funds for payment of the enlarged subsidy, he explained as far from amounting to the alarming proposition into which they were framed by the Governor-General; but, as the fund which had been pointed to by the Governor-General as adequate, had not proved adequate; and as he had been repeatedly commanded by the Governor-General to make known to the Resident his difficulties, and to make use of his advice, he had, for that reason, explained to him, and had done no more, the perplexities which weighed upon his mind. "In the course, however, of these conferences and communications, no impediment of affairs," says he, "ever occurred; and no failure or deficiency whatever was experienced in the discharge of the expenses of the new troops, and in the payment of the kists of the fixed subsidy. On the contrary, those expenses and kists were punctually paid; accordingly the kist of the fixed subsidy, and the charges of the additional troops, have been completely paid to the end of January, 1801, and Colonel Scott has expressed his acknowledgments on the occasion.—It is equally a subject of astonishment and concern to me, that

[1] Dispatches, ii. 471.

whereas, under the former government, the payment of the kists, though so much smaller in amount than the present, was constantly kept in arrear during three or four months, the jumma of the country was diminishing yearly, and yet no such propositions were brought forward,—they should be agitated under the government of a friend, who hopes for every thing from your Lordship's kindness; who is anxious to obey you, and to manifest the steadiness of his attachment; who punctually pays the full amount of his kists, notwithstanding their increased amount; and who has conformed to your Lordship.

"As my consent," says he, "to the first proposition is altogether impracticable (accordingly I have already written an ample reply to that proposition); and, as it is impossible for me, with my own hands, to exclude myself from my patrimonial dominion (for what advantage should I derive from so doing?)—this, therefore, is a measure, which I will never adopt.

"With respect to what your Lordship writes, about providing a territorial resource for the payment of the British troops; since I have not, in any way, delayed or neglected to discharge the kists for the expenses of the troops, but have paid them with punctuality, where is the occasion for requiring any territorial resource?—I expect to derive the most substantial profits from bringing into a flourishing condition this country, which has so long been in a state of waste and ruin. By a separation of territory, my hopes of these substantial profits would be entirely cut off, and a great loss would accrue. How then can I consent to any territorial cession?[1]

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii, 163, 164.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 9.

1801.

This letter brought an answer of immense length from the Governor-General, under date the 5th of April.[1] Having lamented the refusal which had been given to both his propositions, and given a description of the progressive decline of the country, from the mis-government of the Vizir, the Governor-General says, "I now declare to your Excellency, in the most explicit terms, that I consider it to be my positive duty, to resort to any extremity, rather than to suffer the further progress of that ruin, to which the interests of your Excellency and the honourable Company are exposed, by the continued operation of the evils and abuses, actually existing, in the civil and military administration of the province of Oude." After noticing the source of embarrassment still existing in the portion of his troops the dismission of which the Vizir had till now contrived to evade, the Governor-General subjoined, "But I must recall to your Excellency's recollection the fact, which you have so emphatically acknowledged on former occasions, that the principal source of all your difficulties is to be found in the state of the country. I have repeatedly represented to your Excellency the effects of the ruinous expedient of anticipating the collections; the destructive practice of realizing them by force of arms; the annual diminution of the jumma of the country; the precarious tenure by which the aumils and farmers hold their possessions; the misery of the lower classes of the people, absolutely excluded from the protection of the government; and the utter inse-

[1] Dispatches, ii. 474.

curity of life and property, throughout the province of Oude. An immediate alteration in the system of management affords the only hope of providing either for the security of the Company's military funds, or for any other interest involved in the fate of Oude.—It would be vain and fruitless to attempt this arduous task, by partial interference, or by imperfect modifications of a system, of which every principle is founded in error and impolicy, and every instrument tainted with injustice and corruption."—What is here remarkable is, the Governor-General's declared principle of reform; That, of a system of government, radically corrupt, extirpation is the only cure.

He proceeds to infer, that as the Vizir professed himself inadequate to the task of reform; and the undiminished prevalence of evil, since the commencement of his reign, proved the truth of his declaration; he ought to renounce the government, and give admission to others, by whom the great reform could be effectually performed.

He added, "But whatever may be your Excellency's sentiments with respect to this the first proposition; the right of the Company to demand a cession of territory, adequate to the security of the funds necessary for defraying the expense of our defensive engagements with your Excellency is indisputable." This right he proceeded to found on his fears with regard to the future; lest the progressive decline of the country, the fruit of mismanagement, should quickly render its revenue unequal to the payments required.[1]

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. 185—192.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1801.

On the 28th of April a letter to the same purport, nearly in the same words, under signature of the Governor-General, was sent to the Resident.[1] The determination was now adopted to seize the territory, if the consent of its reluctant sovereign was any longer withheld. "Any further reference to me from Oude is," said his Lordship, "unnecessary. I, therefore, empower you to act under the instructions contained in this letter without waiting for additional orders.—If, therefore, his Excellency should persist in rejecting both propositions, you will inform him, that any further remonstrance to me upon this subject will be unavailing; that you are directed to insist upon the immediate cession of the territory proposed to be transferred to the Company; and that in the event of his Excellency's refusal to issue the necessary orders for that purpose, you are authorized to direct the British troops to march for the purpose of establishing the authority of the British government within those districts."[2]

The Vizir having stipulated for certain conditions,[3]

[1] Despatches, ii. 493.

[2] Papers, ut supra, iii. p. 198.

[3] These stipulations were dated on the 3rd Mohurrum, 1216, or the 1st May, and were commented on at length by the Governor-General on the 8th June. The Vizir demurred to the payment of the debts of former Governments of Oude, of the whole expense of the troops raised to oppose the menaced invasion of Zemaun Shah, and any part of the cost of the embassy to Persia, which, as addressed to an object in which Oude was interested, the Governor-General conceived was due by the Vizir. He demanded the undivided inheritance of the possessions of Asoph-ud-Dowla, which was levelled against the possessions of the Begums. He requested that all correspondence regarding the affairs of Oude should be confined to himself and the Resident, which was intended to exclude such of his ministers as were well affected to the English from his councils. That the Resident should pay no attention to persons "ever on the watch to sow dissensions, and stipulated that the engagements entered into should be

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1801.

of which one was, that he should be guaranteed, by a formal obligation, in the future independent exercise of an exclusive authority in the remaining parts of his dominions," it is declared, in the instructions to the Resident, under date the 27th of May; "His Lordship cannot permit the Vizir to maintain an independent power, with a considerable military force, within the territories remaining in his Excellency's possession.—It must never be forgotten that the Governor's original object was not merely to secure the subsidiary funds, but to extinguish the Vizir's military power."[1] This is a part of the design, not only not disclosed by the language held to the Vizir, but hardly consistent with it. In that, he was told, that the vices of his troops were the cause on account of which the English wished them destroyed. According to this new declaration, if the troops had been better, that is more formidable, the English would have liked them only so much the worse.[2]

firm and permanent; that the troops for which the countries were ceded should always be stationed in them, and that whenever he felt inclined to perform pilgrimage, no hindrance should be offered to his departure." The Governor-General rejected these and other proposed articles; as they betrayed an unjustifiable mistrust in the Company's authority and power, disguised an intention to secure their countenance to acts of vindictiveness or extortion, and sought to evade the discharge of just demands. The proposed stipulations were in many respects open to these imputations, and they were justly rejected by the Governor-General. Dispatches, ii. 527.—W.

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 213.

[2] Contrast the language, in the last-quoted sentence, with the following passage of an address delivered to the Vizir in the name of the Governor-General, by his brother Henry Wellesley, in September, 1801; where, after a description of the undisciplined and mutinous condition of the troops of the Vizir, and his own declared opinion of them, these, says the address, "were the primary causes which moved the Governor-General to

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1801.

In a letter of the 8th of June, the Resident gives an account of a conversation the day before between him and the Vizir. "I stated to his Excellency that the general tenor and spirit of his articles of stipulations had excited the greatest concern and surprise in your Lordship's breast, and that I was commanded by your Lordship to communicate to his Excellency your Lordship's absolute rejection of the whole of them. His Excellency replied, that as his paper contained conditions on which alone his consent to the territorial cession could be granted, your Lordship's rejection of them allowed him no other alternative, than that of passive obedience to whatever measures your Lordship might resolve on."

"I next proceeded to state to his Excellency the terms upon which your Lordship is disposed to guarantee to his Excellency and to his posterity the dominion of his Excellency's remaining territory. They were enumerated in the following order and manner: 1st, The continuance of the Company's right to station the British troops in any part of his Excellency's dominions; 2ndly, the restriction of his own military establishment to an extent absolutely necessary for the collection of the revenues, and for the purposes of state; and 3rdly, the introduction of such regulations of police, as should be calculated to secure the internal quiet of his Excellency's country, and the orderly and peaceful behaviour of his subjects of every description.

consider the means of applying an effectual reform to the military establishment of Oude. The plan of this reform originated, not in the voluntary suggestion of his Lordship's mind, but in the alarming state of your Excellency's dominions and power, and in your own express desire." Papers, ut supra, iv. 7.

1801.

"His Excellency's reply to this," says the Resident, "was striking: That the power of stationing the Company's troops in any part of his dominions, together with the other conditions, formed a combination of circumstances, the objects of which would be open to the comprehension of a child; and that it was impossible for him to agree to a territorial cession on such terms.

"I entreated his Excellency to reject from his mind such unjustifiable suspicions, and to summon all the good sense which he possesses, and to reflect on the consequences of a refusal of the propositions which your Lordship had prepared with so much thought and deliberation. He said he by no means meant to impute precipitancy to your Lordship's resolution. But if your Lordship's reflection suggested measures to which he could not accede; the utmost which could be expected from him was passive submission to those measures. And he added, that if your Lordship would give him his dismission, and allow him to go on a pilgrimage; or whether that was permitted or not, the whole of his territorial possessions, and of his treasures, were at the disposal of your Lordship's power: he neither had the inclination nor the strength to resist it; but he could not yield a voluntary consent to propositions so injurious to his reputation."[1]

The Governor-General wished to avoid the appearance of force in seizing the greater part of the Vizir's dominions; and was exceedingly anxious to extort by importunity some appearance of consent.

[1] Papers, ut supra, iv. 231.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1801.

Not only was the Resident urged to use incessant endeavours for this purpose,[1] but on the 30th of June, notice was sent of the resolution to which the Governor-General had proceeded, of sending his brother Henry Wellesley on a mission to the Vizir, in hopes that his near relation to the head of the government would strike with awe the mind of that Prince, and convince him more fully of the impossibility of eluding its declared determination.[2]

Every mode of importunity was tried and exhausted. The scheme of abdication was, with every art of persuasion, and some even of compulsion (if severity in urging pecuniary demands which would have otherwise been relaxed are truly entitled to that designation), urged upon the Vizir, as the measure which, above all, would yield the greatest portion of advantage, with regard, in the first place, to his own tranquillity and happiness; in the second place, to the people of Oude; and in the third, to the British government. If, on the other hand, this measure should unfortunately not obtain his consent, he was desired to consider the territorial cession as a measure which force, if necessary, would be employed to accomplish; and the Resident did, in the month of July, proceed so far as to give notice to some of the aumils, or great revenue managers of the territories intended to be seized, to hold themselves in readiness for transferring their payments and allegiance to the British government; a proceeding which the Vizir represented as giving him exquisite pain, and overwhelming him with disgrace.

[1] Dispatches, ii. 537.—W.

[2] Ibid. ii. 441, 561.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1801.

To all the pressing remonstrances with which he was plied, he opposed only professions of passive, helpless, and reluctant obedience. He also pressed and endeavoured to stipulate for leave to retire, in performance of a pilgrimage: that his eyes might not behold the performance of acts, which he could not contemplate without affliction; though he desired to retain the power of resuming the government of all that remained of his dominions, when his scheme of pilgrimage should be at an end.

On the 3rd of September, Mr. Wellesley arrived at Lucknow; on the 5th, presented to the Vizir a memorial explanatory of the principal objects of his mission, and had with him his first conversation on the 6th.[1] The two propositions were again tendered; and, with every expression of submissiveness, the Vizir undertook to give them a renewed consideration. His answer was delayed till the 15th; when his consent to the first proposition, as what would bring "an everlasting stigma on his name by depriving a whole family of such a kingdom," was again peremptorily refused. The answer which was made by the two negotiators, the Resident and Mr. Wellesley in conjunction, is perhaps the most remarkable which occurs in the annals of diplomacy; "That his Excellency reasoned upon the first proposition as if the execution of it deprived him of the possession of the musnud; whereas the true extent and meaning of it, and indeed the primary object, was to establish himself and posterity more firmly and securely on the musnud, with all

[1] Dispatches, ii. 567.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1801.

the state, dignity, and affluence, appertaining to his exalted situation." A man may be so placed with regard to another, that it is not prudent for him to dispute the truth of what that other advances, should he even assert that black and white are the same colour. It was necessary to be in such a situation, before a proposition like this could be tendered to a man with any hope of escaping exposure. The Vizir was called upon to consign for ever the sovereignty of all his dominions to the Company, and to bind himself never to reside within them, yet this was not to deprive him of his throne! it was more firmly to establish him on it![1]

On the subject of the territorial cession, the Nawab still deferred an explicit answer.[2]

On the 19th of September, instructions were written to the two negotiators, in which they were informed of the determination of the Governor-General, in case of the continued refusal on the part of the Vizir, to give his consent to one of the two propositions, to take from him not a part only, but the whole of his dominions. His Lordship, as usual, supports this resolution with a train of reasoning. The British interests were not secure, unless there was a good government in Oude: unless the Nawab Vizir gave his consent to one of the two propositions, a good government could not be established in Oude: therefore, it would be not only proper, but an imperative duty, to strip that sovereign of all his dominions. "His Lordship has therefore no hesitation," says the document, "in

[1] Papers, ut supra, iv. 1—15.

[2] Ibid. p. 17.

authorizing you, in the event above stated, to declare to his Excellency, in explicit terms, the resolution of the British government to assume the civil and military administration in the province of Oude. Should the communication of the intended declaration fail to produce any change in his Excellency's disposition, his Lordship directs that you will immediately proce d to make the necessary disposition of the army, and every other arrangement for carrying that resolution into immediate and complete effect."[1]

On the same day, however, on which these instructions were written, the Vizir communicated to the two negotiators a paper, in which he gave his consent to the second proposition, provided he was allowed to depart on his pilgrimages, and his son, as his representative, was, during his absence, placed on the throne. The reason assigned was in these words; "for I should consider it a disgrace, and it would be highly unpleasant to me, to show my face to my people here." The negotiators felt embarrassment; resented the imputations which the condition and the manner of it cast upon the British government; but were unwilling, for considerations of slight importance, to lose the advantage of the Vizir's consent, even to the lowest of the two propositions, since they now despaired of it to the first. "Having," say they, "deliberately reflected on every circumstance immediately connected with the negotiation, or which might eventually influence the result of it, we decidedly and unitedly agreed in the opinion, that the important objects of it could not be

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 17.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1801.

accomplished in a more preferable manner than by closing with his Excellency's proposition." A paper, accordingly, declaring their acceptance of the proposition, and attested by their joint signatures and seals, was delivered to the Vizir on the 24th.[1]

On the 27th, his Excellency communicated a proposition, of which the purport was, to secure to him the exclusive administration of the reserved territory. On this topic he was informed that enough had already been said: that the right of the British government, in regard to Oude, extended, not only to the alienation of as much of the territory as it chose to say was necessary to defray the cost of defence; but, even with regard to the remainder, to the placing of it in the military possession of the British troops, and the maintaining of a good government within it. What was this, but to declare, that of this part too, the government, civil and military, must rest in the English, the Vizir possessing the name, but none of the powers of a king? "It is evident," said the Vizir, in a letter on the 29th, "that I can derive no advantage from alienating part of my country, whilst I shall not remain master of the remainder."[2] On this proposition, however, important as he deemed it, he from that time forbore to insist.

The negotiators complained of endeavours to protract the conclusion of the treaty; first, by demanding unnecessary explanations, though they related to matters of great importance, expressed in the treaty in terms excessively vague; and secondly, by delays

[1] Papers, ut supra, iv. 21—23.

[2] Ibid. iv. 39.

1801.

in the delivery of the accounts, though exceedingly voluminous, and somewhat confused. Several discussions took place on the revenues of some of the districts: but on the 10th of November the treaty was mutually exchanged, and, on the 14th, was ratified by the Governor-General at Benares. By this treaty the Nawaub ceded a country, producing 1,35,23,474 rupees of revenue, including expense of collection; and the authority of the British government over the remainder was provided for by the following words; "And the Honourable the East India Company hereby guarantee to his Excellency the Vizir, and to his heirs and successors, the possession of the territories which will remain to his Excellency after his territorial cession, together with *the exercise of his and their authority* within the said dominions. His Excellency engages that he will establish in his reserved dominions such a system of administration (to be carried into effect by his own officers) as shall be conducive to the prosperity of his subjects, and be calculated to secure the lives and property of the inhabitants: and his Excellency will always advise with, and *act in conformity to the counsel,* of the officers of the said Honourable Company."[1] No dominion can be more complete, than that which provides for a perpetual conformity to one's counsel, that is, one's will.[2]

On the same day which the Governor-General ratified the treaty, he created a grand commission for the provisional administration and settlement of the ceded districts. Three of the civil servants of the

[1] Papers, ut supra, iv. p. 29 and 35.

[2] Dispatches, ii. 596.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1801.

Company were appointed a Board of Commissioners; and his brother Henry Wellesley was nominated to be Lieuteuant-Governor of the new territory, and President of the Board.[1]

The Governor-General performed another duty on the same day, which was that of giving the home authorities, along with the intelligence of the conclusion of the treaty, an intimation of the several advantages which he wished them to believe it carried in its bosom. These were, "the entire extinction of the military power of the Nawaub;" the maintenance of a great part of the Bengal army at the Nawaub's expense; deliverance of the subsidy from all the accidents with which it was liable to be affected "by the corruption, imbecility, and abuse, of that vicious and incorrigible system of vexation and misrule, which constituted the government of Oude;" the power acquired by the Company of becoming "the instrument of restoring to affluence and prosperity one of the most fertile regions of the globe, now reduced to the most afflicting misery and desolation, by the depraved administration of the native government:" deliverance from the stain "on the reputation and honour of the British nation in India, upholding by the terror of their name, and the immediate force of their arms, a system so disgraceful in its principles, and ruinous in its effects."[2]

On these supposed advantages a few reflections are required. The impatient desire to extinguish the military power of the Vizir exhibits the sort of rela-

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 27.

[2] Ibid. v. 14, 15.

tion in which the English government in India wishes to stand with its allies. It exhibits also the basis of hypocrisy, on which that government has so much endeavoured to build itself. The Nawaub was stripped of his dominions; yet things were placed in such a form, that it might still be affirmed he possessed them.

With regard to the alleged pecuniary advantages, the case was this. An obligation was contracted to defend and govern a country, for only part of its revenues. The question is, whether this can ever be advantageous. The Company's experience, at least, has been, that the countries of India can, under their administration, hardly ever yield so much as the cost of defence and government. That it is injustice and robbery to take from any people, under the pretext of defending and governing them, more than the lowest possible sum for which these services can be performed, needs no demonstration.

The necessity, perpetually exposed to view, of defending Oude, as a barrier to the Company's frontier, is a fallacy. When the Company received the taxes paid by the people of Oude, and pledged themselves for their good defence and government, the people of Oude became British subjects to all intents and purposes; and the frontier of Oude became the Company's frontier. The question then is, whether it was best to defend a distant, or a proximate frontier. For the same reason that the Company took Oude for a frontier, they ought to have taken Delhi beyond it; after Delhi, another province, and after that another without end. Had they defended the frontier of

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1801. Bengal and Bahar, leaving the province of Oude, as they left the country beyond it, would not the nearer frontier have been easier to defend than the one more remote? If the greater difficulty of defending the more distant frontier of Oude consumed all the money which was obtained from Oude, was there in that case any advantage? If it consumed more than all the money which was obtained from it, was there not in that case a positive loss? The means are not afforded us of exhibiting the loss in figures; but the British legislature, which by a solemn enactment prohibited all extension of frontier, as contrary both to the interest and the honour of the British nation, had declared beforehand that money was only a part of the loss.

The Governor-General's pretensions, raised on the badness of the native government, seem to be overthrown by his acts. If this was incorrigible, while the country remained in the hands of the Nabob, why, having it completely in his power to deliver the people of Oude from a misery which he delights to describe as unparalleled, did the Governor-General leave a great part of the country with the people in it, to be desolated and tortured by this hateful system of misrule? If it was corrigible, as he contradicts himself immediately by saying it was, and by pledging himself in his letter to the home authorities "to afford every practicable degree of security for the lives and property of the Vizir's remaining subjects," there was no occasion for wresting from the Vizir the greater part of his dominions, under the plea, and that the single, solitary plea, that any improve-

ment of the intolerable system of government, while the country remained in his hands, was altogether impossible.

The truth ought never to be forgotten, which the Governor-General here so eagerly brings forward; That the misery, produced by those native governments which the Company upholds, is misery produced by the Company; and sheds disgrace upon the British name.[1]

From his first arrival in India, the Governor-General had cherished the idea of paying an early visit to the interior and more distant parts of the provinces more immediately subject to his authority; but the circumstances which had required his presence at Calcutta or Madras, had till now postponed the execution of his design. Part of his object was to ascertain the real effects of the Company's government upon the prosperity of the country, upon the wealth, industry, morals, and happiness of the population; and to acquire a knowledge of the character of the people, and of their modes of thinking, all more perfectly than, without personal inspection, he regarded as possible. The design was laudable. But a short reflection might have convinced him, that, in a progress of a few months, a great part of which was spent on the river, all the observations which he, incapacitated from mixing with the natives, both by his station, and his language, was in a situation

[1] This sentiment is expressed by Mr. Henry Wellesley, in his account of the progress of the negotiation: letter to the Governor-General, dated 7th January, 1802; papers, ut supra, iv. 35. It is several times expressed by Colonel Scott, especially in his conversations with the Vizir, during the course of the negotiation; see papers, vol. iii. passim.

to make, were so very few and partial, that they could form a just foundation for few useful conclusions; and only exposed him, if he was inclined to over-rate them, to be more easily duped by the men through whose eyes it behoved him to see, and on whom he was still compelled to rely for all his information. To learn the effects of a government upon a people, and to ascertain their temper and modes of thinking, by personal observation, requires long, and minute, and extensive intercourse. What, in the compass of a few weeks, or months, can a man collect, respecting these important circumstances, by looking, from his barge, or his palanquin, as he proceeds along, and at one or two of the principal places conversing in state with a small number of the leading men, eager not to salute his ears or his eyes with an opinion or a fact, but such as they expect will minister to his gratification? What a man, in these circumstances, is sure to do, is, to confirm himself in all the opinions, right or wrong, with which he sets out; and the more strongly, the higher the value which he attaches to the observing process he is then performing. What was to be expected, therefore, accurately happened; the Governor-General saw none but admirable effects of the Company's admirable government; and if those of an opposite sort had been ten times as many as they were, they would all have been equally invisible to his eyes. In surveying a country, it is not easy to form sound opinions, even when the means of observation are the most perfect and full: in India, the Company's servants, setting out with strong anticipations, and having means of observation the most scanty and

defective, have commonly seen such things only, as it was their desire and expectation to see.

Other advantages, which the Governor-General expected to realize by his presence in the different parts of the provinces, were, an increased attention to the discharge of their duties, in the various local ministers of government, civil and military, who would thus be more sensibly convinced of the vigilant inspection which was maintained over them; and, a new degree of confidence and satisfaction, with respect to their government, in the body of the people, thus made to see with their eyes the solicitude with which the conduct of those who commanded them was watched. But the circumstance which most strongly operated upon the mind of the Governor-General, at the time when he resolved to commence his journey, was, the effect which his departure, with the declared intention of visiting Oude, was expected to produce in accelerating the submission of the Vizir to the demands with which he was pressed. Preparations were made for the commencement of the voyage on the river early in July, 1801; but owing to the delay of the despatches expected from Europe, and other causes, it was the 15th of August before he was enabled to embark. It was on the 18th, in a council held on board the yacht at Barrackpore, that Mr. Speke (the Commander-in-Chief having preceded the Governor-General in this excursion) was chosen, during the absence of the Head Ruler, Vice-President of the Council, and Deputy Governor of Fort William. On the 23rd of September, the Governor-General was at Monghir. On the 14th of November, at the time of ratifying the treaty, he was on the Ganges,

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

near Benares. And on the 19th of January, 1802, he was met at Cawnpore by the Nawaub Vizir, who had left his capital to do him honour by the ceremony of anticipation.[1]

The Governor-General resolved to soothe the mind of the Nabob, under the mortifying sacrifices to which he had so lately been compelled to submit, by a studied display of personal respect; as well for the purpose of substituting pleasurable to painful feelings, as for that of moulding his inclination to the compliances which yet remained to be exacted of him. He abstained accordingly from soliciting his mind on those subjects, till he had made, as he conceived, a very favourable impression upon it.[2] Soon after they had arrived at Lucknow, the Governor-General requested a private conference with his Excellency, and gave him intimation of the acts which he was expected to perform. These were, the immediate discharge of the arrear of the augmented subsidy, amounting to twenty-one lacs of rupees; the immediate reduction of his Excellency's military establishment to the scale described in the treaty; an exchange of one of the new districts for the purpose of removing an interruption in the line of the Company's frontier; the regular payment of the pensions to his relatives and dependants; the reform, on a plan to be given by the English, of the government within his reserved dominions; and the concentration of the British force, which was to be employed within those dominions, at a cantonment in the vicinity of Lucknow. For obedience, on

[1] Papers, ut supra, v. 11—17.

[2] Dispatches, ii. 672.—W.

most of these points, the Vizir was prepared, either by inclination, or his knowledge of the inability of resistance. For the payment of arrears he only requested time; and could not help expressing his opinion, that neither necessity nor utility required the concentration of the British force at Lucknow. The object of principal importance was, the introduction of a better government in his reduced dominions. On this subject the Nawaub professed that his opinions coincided with those of the British ruler; but complained that he was not possessed of sufficient authority, within his dominions, to carry any of his own designs into effect. On this subject, he manifested great reluctance to explain what he meant. When explanation was obtained from him, it appeared, that he was galled by the interference of the Resident, and made this last effort to obtain such an exemption from that restraint, as would have destroyed, says the Governor-General, "that degree of interference and control which is indispensably necessary for the support of the British influence in Oude; and would have rendered nugatory that stipulation of the treaty which provides for the security of the British influence over the measures of his Excellency's administration." It also appeared, that he was desirous of a change of the Resident, who was personally disagreeable to him. But on no one of these points did the determination of the Governor-General admit of any relaxation. In these circumstances, the Nawaub, whether disgusted with his situation, or in the spirit of stratagem, renewed his request for permission to absent himself on a pilgrimage, and to leave his

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

government in the hands of his second son. Though the Governor-General stated his reasons for disapproving this design, he gave him assurance that he would not oppose it; and expressed the highest indignation when the Nawaub, as in distrust, betrayed afterwards an inclination to render the payment of arrears a condition dependent upon compliance with this request.[1]

As an introduction to the measures which he designed to propose for improving the government of the Nawaub's dominions, the Governor-General held up to his view, what he regarded as the causes of the existing evils. The abuses arising from the employment of a licentious soldiery in executing the business of government among the people, were once more displayed, but chiefly with intent to declare, that for this evil a remedy, in the annihilation-reform, was already applied. Of all the evils which remained; evils, which the Governor-General had represented as so enormous that nothing less than the abdication of the sovereign, or the complete transfer of all his property into the hands of the Company, could suffice for their cure, the causes, according to his enumeration, reduced themselves to two; First, "The want of a judicial administration for the protection of the lives and property of the subjects, for the detection and punishment of crimes, for the redress of grievances, and for the adjustment of disputed claims;" Secondly, "The abuses prevailing in the administration of the revenues—arising, principally, from the destructive

[1] Papers, ut supra, v. 20—25.

practice of anticipating the revenues, of assigning the charge of the collections to persons who offer the highest terms, or the largest amount of nuzzerana; from the uncertain tenure by which the aumils hold the charge of their respective districts; the violation of the engagements contracted between the aumils, Zemindars, under-renters, and ryots, the arbitrary and oppressive exactions which pervade the whole system of the revenue, through every gradation, from the aumil to the ryot; the defective and injudicious constitution of the whole system of revenue; and the injurious mode of making the collections."[1]

By these, the very words, in conjunction with the acts, of the Governor-General, we are given to understand, that a bad judicial, and a bad taxing system (excepting the army, the only causes of evil in Oude,) are quite sufficient to render a government the scourge and desolation of a country, and to make the subversion of such a government, both in name and in reality, but at any rate in reality, if not also in name, a duty imperiously demanded at the hand of whoever has the power to bring it about.

When, however, the Governor-General manifested a sensibility of such uncommon strength (and on such a subject the sensibility of a man is naturally in proportion to the united strength of his moral and intellectual virtues) to the unbounded evils which spring from defective systems of law and taxation, it is remarkable that he did not turn his thoughts to the effects produced by the systems of law and

[1] Papers, ut supra, v. 25, 26.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

taxation, of which he himself superintended the administration. It is declared, in the strongest and most explicit terms, by several of the Company's servants, best acquainted with Indian affairs, in their examination before the House of Commons, in 1806, that, not in respect to army, judicature, or taxation, was the situation of Oude, though viewed with such horror by the Governor-General, more unfavourable, than that of other native governments of India; with which it might truly be regarded as upon a level.[1] The government of Bengal, before it passed into the hands of the English, had been distinguished among the governments of India for its vices rather than its virtues. Yet we have seen it declared, and put upon record, by the most experienced servants of the Company, in their solemn official reports, that in their opinion the new systems of judicature and taxation, so laboriously, and so disinterestedly introduced by the English government, had not improved, but had rather deteriorated the condition of the great body of the people.[2] It is not, however, correct to say, that the Governor-General turned not his attention to the effects of the systems of judicature and taxation, the administration of which it was his business to superintend. He thought of them quite sufficiently; but he was altogether deceived. It was perfectly impossible for him to see with his own eyes what was sufficient to convince a mind, impressed both by anticipation and interest with other notions, that the British systems were ill adapted to the ends they had in view; and

[1] See the Minutes of Evidence on the Oude Charge, p. 32, 35, 49, 53, 74.
[2] See ch. vi. passim.

he was daily assured by those whose anticipations and interests were similar to his own, and who paid their court by speaking opinions calculated to please, that the effects produced were all excellent; he, therefore, believed that they were all excellent, and assured the home authorities, that he had been enabled to ascertain, by actual observation on his journey, that they were all excellent, and that in the highest degree. He concluded, therefore, most conscientiously, that nothing happier could be done for the people of Oude, than to assimilate their situation as nearly as practicable to that of the people in the Company's provinces.

From the specimens of the loose, and defective, and tautological language of the Governor-General, exhibited in his statement of the sources of evil in the government of Oude, the intelligent reader will perceive in what obscurity, on the subjects of judicature and taxation, the mind of that ruler remained; and how crude and insufficient were the ideas which, upon these subjects, floated in his brain. He had nothing further to recommend than, First, on the subject of judicature, to establish district courts, and a general court of appeal and control, upon the plan of the district courts, and the courts of Sudder Dewannee, and Nizamut Adaulut, in the Company's dominions; and, secondly, on the subject of taxation, to give the district in charge to persons of undoubted character and qualifications, to pay those persons by a salary, and make their further profits depend upon the augmentation of their collections; to continue them in their office while their behaviour yielded satisfaction; to compel them, through the

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1802.

courts of justice, to fulfil their engagements with the middlemen, and the middlemen to fulfil their engagements with one another, and with the ryots.

Along with the establishment of courts of justice, the Governor-General stated, also, the necessity of "an efficient system of police, calculated to secure the apprehension of offenders, for the purpose of bringing them to justice." And he did not prescribe conformity with the practice of the Company in matters of detail, for which he referred the Nawab to the advice of the Resident, because matters of detail must, he said, be regulated by local circumstances, and adapted to the constitution of the government, and the actual condition of the people.[1]

How little security, for an improvement of the government, these changes afforded, it requires but a feeble insight into the springs of human affairs, sufficiently to discern. He would appoint new officers of justice and police; but where was any security that they would perform their duty, and not multiply, by the abuse of their powers, the evils they were intended to extinguish? It appears that the Governor-General was ignorant how completely the English systems of law and taxation were unprovided with securities for the protection of the people, notwithstanding the superior intelligence and good intention of the English government itself. For preventing the gatherers and farmers of the taxes from their usual exactions and oppressions, the Governor-General trusted entirely to the courts of

[1] Papers, ut supra, v. 25, 26.

justice; but unless sufficient securities were created in the constitution of the courts, and code of law, the officers of justice would only become the sharers and protectors of every profitable crime.

Though it appears that the Governor-General had very little knowledge of what properties are required in systems of judicature, and of taxation, to prevent them from ensuring the misery of the people; yet, of one security he gives a just conception: "The rights of property, of all descriptions of landholders, should be defined; and the definition of those rights should form the basis of adjudication."[1] When he mentions landlords, of course it is not exclusively. He means not that the rights of that class of men should have the protection of law; and the rights of other men be left the sport and prey of arbitrary will. He means that the rights of all men should be accurately defined. And he would allow, that not only their rights but their obligations should be defined, whence alone the violations of them can be effectually suppressed. These definitions, he would, in like manner, allow, ought, by all means, to be made known to every individual whom they concern, that is, the whole community; in other words, they should be formed into a book, and effectually disseminated and taught.[2] But when the Governor-

[1] Papers, ut supra, v. p. 26.

[2] It may be useful to some persons to see, what real good sense, without the aid of systematic inquiry, has taught on this subject in a remarkable age and country. *Συνιετε καθ' ὁν τροπον, ω ανδρες Αθηναιοι, ὁ Σολων τȣς νομȣς ᾡς καλως κελευει τιθεναι; ......ἱν' ἑις ῃ περι των οντων εκαστȣ νομος, και μη τȣς ιδιωτας αυτο τȣτο ταραττῃ, και ποιῃ των ἁπαντας ειδοτων τȣς νομȣς ελαττον εχειν· αλλα πασιν ῃ ταυτα αναγνωναι και μαθειν ἁπλα και σαφη τα δικαια, και προ*

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

General expressed his conviction of the great importance of embodying law in acccurate definitions,

τȣτων γε επεταξεν εκθειναι προσθεν των επωνυμων, και τῳ γραμματει παραδȣναι· τȣτονδ' εν ταις εκκλησιαις αναγινωσκειν, ἱν' ἑκαστος ὑμων, ακȣσας πολλακις, και κατα σχολην σκεψαμενος, ἁ αν ῃ και δικαια και συμφεροντα, ταυτα νομοθετῃ. Demosth. contra Leptinem: Reiske, i. 485. The circumstances here pointed out, on the authority of Solon, are, first, clearness, simplicity, and certainty in the laws; so great, that any private man may be as well acquainted with them, as little liable to sustain any evil by his ignorance of them, as the man who makes them the study of his life: Secondly, that the most effectual means should be taken to make every man fully acquainted with the laws, by exposing them, in terms, to public view, even before enactment, and making them be read by the public reader, in the congregations or assemblies.

Μαλιστα μεν ȣν προσηκει τȣς ορθως κειμενȣς, ὁσα ενδεχεται, παντα διοριζειν αυτȣς, και ὁτι ελαχιστα καταλειπειν επι τοις κρινȣσι· πρωτον μεν, ὁτι ἑνα λαβειν και ολιγȣς, ραον, η πολλȣς ευ φρονȣντας και δυναμενȣς νομοθετειν και δικαζειν. Επειθ', ἁι μεν νομοθεσιαι εκ πολλȣ χρονȣ σκεψαμενων γινονται· ἁι δε κρισεις εξ ὑπογυιȣ, ὡστε χαλεπον αποδιδοναι το δικαιον και το συμφερον καλως τȣς κρινοντας. Το δε παντων μεγιστον, ὁτι ἡ μεν τȣ νομοθετȣ κρισις, ȣ κατα μερος, ȣτε περι των παροντων αλλα περι μελλοντων τε και καθολȣ εστι· ὁ δ' εκκλησιαστης, και δικαστης, ηδη περι παροντων και αφωρισμενων κρινȣσι· προς ὁȣς και το φιλεν ηδη, και το μισειν, και το ιδιον συμφερον συνηρηται πολλακις· ὡστε μηκετι δυνασθαι θεωρειν ἱκανως το αληθες, αλλ' επισκοτειν τῃ κρισει το ιδιον ἡδυ η λυπηρον. Arist. Rhetor. lib. i. cap. 1. The proposition here is, That a system of law, to be good, must define every thing, susceptible of definition, within the field of law; and leave as little as possible to the judges. Three reasons are annexed: First, that it is easier to find one or two men, provided with the wisdom necessary for the making of laws, than to find a multitude: Secondly, that legislation is to be performed cautiously and deliberately; judication must be performed upon the spur of the occasion, and expeditiously, which takes from judges the power of tracing accurately the limits of utility and justice: Thirdly, the decision of the legislator, and that is the most important consideration of all, is not about *particulars*, and cases present to the senses; but about *genera*, and cases yet to come; whereas the decision of the judge is about particulars, and things present to the senses; things to which his passions are apt to be linked, and by which his interests are apt to be affected: in such a manner, that his discernment of right and wrong is obscured, by the intervention of what is agreeable or painful to himself.

that is, in a well-constructed code; in what degree was it unknown to him that this indispensable requisite to the good administration of justice was, over the greater part of the field of law, altogether wanting in the provinces which he governed, and even in his native country itself? [1]

[1] This lengthened review of the negotiations with Oude avoids, with some want of candour, their most important feature, the political necessity of the measures adopted. It was too late to inquire by what means the kind of connexion which had been formed with the princes of this country had grown up. They had become dependants upon the English government, their principality was an integral part of the British empire; was it to be suffered that this part should be a source of weakness instead of strength; that its rulers should be objects of distrust and fear instead of reliance? It was undeniable that their very existence was the fruit of British forbearance and protection. It was at any time in the power of the English government to annihilate their Nawab Vizirs, and had their support been withdrawn those princes must have fallen victims to the superior strength and ambition of the Mahrattas. To have permitted this would, however, have brought a dangerous enemy close to the English frontiers, whilst it would have added to their means of inflicting injury. The entire command of the resources of Oude was therefore, and must ever be, a legitimate object of British policy, and an equitable return for our protection and forbearance. The resources of Oude were, however, unavailable as long as they were mismanaged; they were worse than unavailable, they were hurtful. That the Nawab Vizir could not maintain an effective body of troops was not matter of conjecture but of experience. Sadut Ali had himself declared that no trust could be placed in them if Zemaun Shah invaded Hindustan, and on the occasion of Vizir Ali's insurrection they had shown more disposition to join than to oppose him. It was evident, therefore, that the military force of Oude must be entirely under the control of the British Government. That Government well knew that troops, to be effective, must be paid: the incorrigible improvidence of Asiatic princes rendered it certain that the treasury of Lucknow would not long furnish the pay of the army with punctuality, and the only source upon which reliance could be placed was the assignment of part of the revenues of the principality, or in other words, part of the principality itself. It is objected to this in the text, that we thereby undertook the defence of the whole with the revenues of a part; if those revenues were sufficient the objection is without force, and that they were deemed sufficient follows from the extent of the Government demand. They themselves indicated what they wanted. The same object, the safety and prosperity of the whole state, considering Oude as a part of the whole state, not as an independent and separate state, required the

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

Having accomplished all the measures to which his notions of reform for Oude were extended, the

interposition of the supreme authority, even in the civil government of the province. It is the duty and interest of the British empire that Oude should be prosperous. Now it is very true that the shortest and simplest mode of providing for the good government, civil as well as military, of Oude, would have been the assumption of the whole authority, and the suppression of the expensive, and, sometimes, unmanageable machinery of a ruling dynasty of native princes. It may be doubted, however, if the abrupt supersession of Sadut Ali by an English functionary would have been more consonant with English notions of justice and moderation than the abstraction of a part only of his dominions, and his enforced subordination to the will of the Government. The title, the station, and many of the privileges and powers of his place were still left to the Nawab Vizir, and, at a subsequent period, he has been gratified by the title of king. This is more than a bare title, and if the authority that it implies be judiciously and ably exercised, it may be exercised for all the purposes of civil administration without any control from the British Government. That it will be so exercised for any length of time is very unlikely; and the interference of the paramount state will, therefore, be still required. That interference, however, is fully justifiable upon the principle that the degree of independence left to the king of Oude is matter of sufferance, and that it must be still more limited, or altogether extinguished, whenever the interests of the British empire in India, of which it is a constituent part, clearly demand its curtailment or suppression. That the mode in which the negotiation was carried on was, in some respects, objectionable, may be admitted. The real character of the transaction was coercion. Sadut Ali was compelled reluctantly to agree to loss of territory and diminution of power. Still this merit may be claimed for the attempts at procuring his acquiescence, that they were intended to be less grating to his feelings than a stern and arrogant demand of his submission would have been. The intention was not disappointed, and Sadut Ali no doubt found some consolation for his impaired dignity in the contemplation of the struggles he had made to avert the catastrophe. A very short time after the business had been settled he seems to have been reconciled to his fate, and to have been happy in the quiet enjoyment of the amusements of royalty and the accumulation of wealth. See Lord Valentia's Travels, vol. i.

Some of the comments of the text upon Lord Wellesley's general or special reasonings are not undeserved. His Lordship, like Warren Hastings, was somewhat too fond of writing. He who writes or talks much will say or write more than is necessary—something that had better have been left unsaid or unwritten. Fewer words would have been more than enough to have convinced Sadut Ali that the Governor-General, whilst he wished to preserve the show of attention to the Nawab's feelings,

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

Governor-General quitted Lucknow at the end of February, and proceeded to Benares, on his way to Calcutta. He had appointed the agents of the Bhow Begum to meet him there, for the adjustment of certain claims, which she preferred, both against the Vizir, and the English government. But he was still obliged to defer the decision. A circumstance had occurred with regard to the Begum, which is too intimately connected with other proceedings of the English government in Oude, not to require to be shortly adduced. While the negotiations were proceeding with the Vizir, the Begum had formally tendered to the English government an offer to constitute the Company her heir. The object of the Begum in this determination was to secure herself completely, by the protection of the English government, against the exactions to which she was exposed at the hand of her grandson. Against this disposal of her property, however, the law of the country, and the law of nations, interposed; it being an established principle of Mohammedan jurisprudence that the sovereign is legal heir to the property of all his subjects; and the Governor-General acknowledging "the justice and policy of preventing the transfer of individual property, by gift or testament to a foreign state." He determined, however, to accept the legacy, and reasoned in favour of his determination in the following words: "The exalted

was determined to effect his purpose, and would have saved his noble correspondent from much of that unfriendly criticism to which his voluminous epistles have, not without some foundation, exposed him. For further illustrations of the Oude negotiations, see the Wellesley Dispatches, vol. ii., also the Asiatic Annual Register, vol. viii., and the Parliamentary Debates for 1806.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

rank of the Begum, and the superior relation in which she stands towards his Excellency the Vizir, are circumstances which distinguish her condition from that of a subject possessing no rights of property independent of the will of his despotic sovereign: She derives her title to her present possessions from the same source from which his Excellency derives his title to the musnud; her right therefore to dispose of her personal property, in any manner she may deem expedient, except for purposes injurious to the interests of the state, must be admitted—and the peculiar nature of the connexion subsisting between his Excellency the Vizir and the Honourable Company, renders the Begum's proposed transfer of her wealth to the latter, at the period of her decease, wholly unobjectionable with reference to the public interests of the state of Oude." The remarkable contrast, between this doctrine relative to the property of the Begum, and the doctrine which was promulgated by Mr. Hastings, as the ground on which he bartered to the late Vizir the liberty of taking it away from her, the doctrine too on which that Governor was defended, ay, and acquitted, before the high court of parliament,[1] will not escape the attentive student of Indian history, to the latest generation. The Governor-General adds; "The character of his Excellency the Vizir, and his inordinate passion for the accumulation of wealth, justify the Begum in seeking timely protection for herself, her family, and dependants, from the effects of his Excellency's known views, and sordid disposition." Recollecting, it seems, the traffic, between

[1] Vide supra.

a predecessor of the Governor-General, and a predecessor of his own, when certain benefits to the Company were exchanged for a permission to spoil the Begum, and other members of the royal family, the Vizir had looked to this quarter, as a source of indemnity for the cessions to which he was urged, and had signified his disposition to conclude a similar bargain. The indignation of the Governor-General is expressed in the following words: "The inclination manifested by his Excellency the Vizir, in the form of a conditional assent to Lieutenant-Colonel Scott's proposal for a territorial cession, to degrade and despoil the most distinguished characters of his family and his court—a design, though under some degree of disguise, particularly directed to the Begum—and his insidious and disgraceful attempt to obtain the sanction of the British name to such unwarrantable acts of proscription, have given additional weight, in his Lordship's mind, to the arguments above detailed, and have determined his Lordship not only to acquiesce in the Begum's proposal to its utmost extent, if it should be revived on her part; but to encourage her Highness to renew her proposition at the earliest period of time, and by every justifiable means."[1] Such is the language, in which Marquis Wellesley treats a conduct, which had been pursued by one of his most distinguished predecessors; defended, as meritorious, by some of the most powerful of the public men in England; and solemnly declared to be innocent, by a judicial decision of the High Court of Parliament itself.

[1] Instructions, under the signature of the Secretary of the Government; sent to Mr. Wellesley and Colonel Scott, at Lucknow, under date Monghir, 21st September, 1801. Papers, ut supra, iv. 18, 19.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

In the mean time, the substitution of the forms and agents of the Company's government to those of the government of the Vizir was carrying on in the ceded provinces. The Governor-General had stated to the home authorities, in the letter in which he announced the ratification of the treaty, that the reasons which induced him to vest his brother with extraordinary powers for the superintendence of this service, were the great difficulty of the task, the peculiarly appropriate qualifications which Mr. Wellesley had displayed in the negotiation with the Vizir, and the authority which he would derive from his relationship with himself. And he expressed his "trust, that in the course of a year, or possibly within a shorter period of time, the settlement of the ceded districts might be so far advanced, as to enable him to withdraw Mr. Wellesley, and leave the administration of the country nearly in the same form as that of Benares."[1] When this letter reached the Court of Directors, that body of rulers, professing their inability, till they received the proper documents, to decide upon the means by which the treaty had been accomplished, declared the obligation, under which they felt themselves, to lose no time, in condemning the appointment of Mr. Wellesley, who was the private secretary of the Governor-General, and belonged not to the class of Company's servants as "a virtual supersession of the just rights" of those servants, whom the Court of Directors were bound to protect; and a violation of the act of parliament which expressly confines the filling up of vacancies

[1] See the Letter in which he announced the ratification of the treaty, dated, on the Ganges, 14th of November, 1801, papers, ut supra, v. 15.

in the civil line of the Company's service in India to the civil servants of the Company. They directed accordingly, "that Mr. Wellesley be removed forthwith." This letter, dated the 19th of August, 1802, transmitted, as was legally necessary, to the Board of Control, was returned, on the 20th of September, with a prohibition to express for the present any decision upon the appointment of Mr. Wellesley, for the following reasons; first, because the service to which Mr. Wellesley was appointed, being not in the fixed and ordinary line of the Company's service, and not permanent, but extraordinary and temporary, it did not appear that the rights of the covenanted servants, or the law which prescribed the mode of supplying vacancies, were infringed; secondly, because occasions might occur in which, for extraordinary duties, the employment of persons, without the line of the Company's service, might be expedient; thirdly, because, if there existed any such cases, it was proper to wait for the reasons of the Governor-General, before a decision was pronounced; especially, as Mr. Wellesley, it was probable, would have resigned his office, before the order for his removal could be received, and as he had disinterestedly declined all emoluments beyond the amount of what would have belonged to him, as private secretary to the Governor-General.[1]

On the 13th of March, 1802, the Governor-General wrote to the Court of Directors in the following words: "I have the satisfaction to assure your Honourable Court, that the settlement of the ceded provinces has proceeded with a degree of

[1] Papers, ut supra, ii. 42—44.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. facility and success, which has exceeded my most sanguine expectations."

1802. A business, relating to another territorial cession, in the mean time occupied the attention of the Lieutenant-Governor. In addition to the territorial cessions which had been extorted from the Nawab Vizir, was the tribute paid to the government of Oude by the sovereign of Furruckabad. The ancestors of this Prince had long solicited, and enjoyed, the protection of the East India Company, against the wish to dispossess them, which they knew was cherished by the Nabobs of Oude. Their principality extended along the western banks of the Ganges, adjoining the north-western boundary of the principality of Oude, a space of about 150 miles in length, and a third of that extent in breadth; yielding a revenue of nearly ten and a half lacs of rupees. It was surrounded for the greater part by the territories belonging to Oude, which had been recently transferred to the East India Company. For terminating the disputes, which had long subsisted between the princes of Furruckabad and Oude, a treaty, under the influence of the English government, was concluded in 1786; according to which it was agreed, that the Nawab of Furruckabad should not retain any military force beyond what was requisite for purposes of state; that the Nawab of Oude should always maintain a battalion of Sepoys in Furruckabad for the protection of the territories and person of the Nawab; and "on account," says the treaty, "of the troops which the Nawab Asoph ud Dowla shall so maintain, the Nawab Muzuffer Jung will pay him the sum of four

lacs and fifty thousand rupees yearly, instead of all the sums which the said Asoph ud Dowla, in capacity of Vizir, used formerly to take from him; and henceforth his people shall be at his own disposal." The English government having, in its quality of protector, quartered a Resident upon the Nawab of Furruckabad, and a use having been made of his power, which the Marquis Cornwallis, in a despatch to his masters, described as "having ever been highly offensive to the Vizir, as having in no degree promoted the interest or the satisfaction of the Nawab, and as having—while it produced no sort of advantage to the Company—by no means contributed to the credit of the government of Hindustan," that Supreme Governor, in 1787, determined, "That the English Resident at Furruckabad should be recalled, and that no other should afterwards be appointed."

The eldest son of the Nawab Muzuffer Jung, being convicted of the murder of his father, was carried to Lucknow, and confined by orders of the Vizir, when the succession devolved upon the second son of the late Nawab, at that time a minor. The appointment of a regent was regarded as a point of too much importance to be left to the Vizir; the English government interfered, and made choice of an uncle of the young Nabob, who had formerly been minister. On the visit paid by the late Governor-General to Lucknow, in 1797, he was waited upon by the young Nawab, and the Regent, who had numerous complaints to prefer against one another. The Regent was continued in his office, and terms were drawn up for better regulating the

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

administration. The Marquis Wellesley, in his progress towards Oude, had required the presence of both the Nawab and the Regent at Caunpore, and had carried them with him to Lucknow. His purpose was, both to receive their acknowledgments upon the late transfer of the Furruckabad tribute; and "to adjust," as he himself expresses it, "the terms of a new and improved arrangement of the affairs of that principality—upon terms calculated to secure its prosperity, and beneficial to the interests of the Honourable Company." The pressure, notwithstanding, of other affairs, prevented him from engaging in the business of the meditated changes; and he left the execution of them to the Lieutenant-Governor of the ceded country, to whom the Nawab and Regent were desired to repair with all practicable expedition.[1]

The termination of the Nawab's minority was now approaching, when he desired that the power and management of his principality should be put into his own hands. In writing his instructions to Mr. Wellesley, the Governor-General remarks, that the time was now come, when it became necessary either to vest the Nawab with the general government of the country, or to demand the cession of it to the Honourable Company.

The advantages of the cession to the Company, "both in a political and pecuniary point of view," he said, "were obvious." And to leave the principality to the rightful heir of its ancient masters, was extremely objectionable; inasmuch as the Regent,

[1] Papers, ut supra, xii. 9. See also the article of charge against Marquis Wellesley, relating to Furruckabad. For the statistics of Furruckabad see Rennel, and Hamilton's East India Gazetteer.

who had an interest in defaming him, had given him a very bad character. It is true, the Nawab had also given the Regent a bad character; but the Regent, it seems, met with belief, the Nawab not.

Two remarks are here unavoidable. The first is, that whatever were the springs of action in the mind of the Governor-General, he was forcibly drawn to believe, in conformity with his wishes; and few men, where the case is involved in any obscurity, are capable of believing in opposition to them. The next remark is, that we have here another instance of the doctrine, taught to the world, both by the reasonings, and still more remarkably by the practice of the Governor-General, that, whenever the character of a sovereign is bad, and his government either bad, or so much as likely to be so, he ought to be deposed, and his power transferred to hands, in which a better use may be expected to be made of it.

It is not to be supposed, that the Governor-General would wish to narrow his doctrine to the basis of his particular case; because that would reduce it to the atrocious Machiavelism, That it is always lawful for a strong prince to depose a weak one, at least if he has first kept him a while in the thraldom of dependence, whenever he chooses to suppose that he himself would govern better than the weak one.

The Regent arrived at Bareilly, which the Lieutenant-Governor of the ceded districts had made the seat of his administration, on the 30th of April, 1802, a few days earlier than the Nawab. The Lieutenant-Governor requested to know what plan of reform he would recommend, for the govern-

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1802.

ment of the Nabob's country. "He appeared at first," says the Lieutenant-Governor, "very unwilling to disclose his sentiments, stating in general terms that he was unable to form any judgment of what was best for the country; but that he was willing to subscribe to any arrangement which the Governor-General might deem adviseable." The Lieutenant-Governor, proceeded to press him, declaring to him, that "without a free and unreserved communication on his part, no confidential intercourse could subsist between them." The Regent stated his wish to decline the suggestion of any opinions, and entreated to hear what were the designs of the British government. "Being desirous," says the Lieutenant-Governor, "that the proposal, of vesting the civil and military authority in the hands of the British government, should originate with the Regent, I continued to urge him to an unreserved disclosure of his sentiments with respect to the most eligible plan for the future government." He then stated, that three modes occurred to his mind. One was, that the administration should still remain in his own hands. Another was, that the Nawab, upon the expiration of his minority, should assume the reins of government. The third was, that the English should take the government to themselves. As to the first plan, the Lieutenant-Governor replied, that the aversion of the Nawab would render it impracticable. From the second, if the character ascribed to the Nawab, by the Regent himself, were true, the effects of good government could not be expected. Remained, as the only unobjectionable scheme, the transfer of all the powers of government to the Honourable Com-

pany. "Here," says Mr. Wellesley, in his account transmitted to the Governor-General, "I stated, that your Lordship had long been of opinion that this was the only arrangement which could ultimately afford satisfaction to all parties, and establish the welfare and prosperity of the province upon a secure and permanent foundation." The Regent was assured that a liberal provision would be made for all the persons whom this arrangement affected, and that his interests in particular would not be neglected. The Regent "stated in reply, that he had the fullest reliance upon the British government; and that he was ready to promote the Governor-General's views, by all the means in his power."

Upon the arrival of the Nawab, a representation was made to him of the necessity of a radical reform in the government of his country, and of the plan which the Governor-General approved. Requesting to receive the proposition in writing, it was transmitted to him in the following words; "That the Nawab should be continued on the musnud of his ancestors with all honour, consigning over the civil and military administration of the province of Furruckabad into the hands of the Company's government: that whatever balance should remain from the revenues collected, after paying the amount of the Company's tribute, the charges of government, and the expense of a battalion of Sepoys, in the room of an army now maintained by the Regent, should be paid without fail into the Nawab's treasury." What is here remarkable is the *language*; the Nawab was to be continued on the throne of his ancestors, with all honour; at the same time that

the government and dominion of the country were wholly and for ever to be taken from him, and he was to be reduced to the condition of a powerless individual, a mere pensioner of the state. A new degree of skill, in the mode of stating things, had been acquired since abdication was proposed to the Vizir. The Nawab remonstrated, in moderate, but pathetic terms: "I have understood the proposition for delivering up the country of Furruckabad into the hands of the Company's government. I have no power to make any objections to whatever you propose: but you know that the Governor-General, during my minority, delivered over the country to Khirudmund Khan, as deputy; now that my minority has passed, when I was in hopes that I should be put in possession of the country and property, this proposition is made to me. I am totally at a loss what to do. If I deliver over the country to the English government, all my relations and my neighbours, and all the nobility of Hindustan, will say that I have been found so unfit by the English government, that they did not think proper to intrust me with the management of such a country: and I shall never escape, for many generations, from the sneers of the people. If, on the contrary, I say any thing in disobedience to your orders, it will be against all rules of submission and propriety." He then proceeded to propose, that the English government should appoint one of its own servants, as superintendent of revenue; who should take cognizance of the collections; send even his own agents to the villages, to act in common with the Furruckabad collectors; and transmit the stated

tribute to the Company. "In this way," said he, "your wishes may be accomplished, and my honour and name preserved among the people.—As hitherto no person throughout Hindustan, without a fault, has been deprived of the Company's friendship and generosity, if I should also gain my desires, it would not derogate from your friendship and generosity."

The Lieutenant-Governor immediately replied, that his proposition was inadmissible; that, according to the conviction of the Governor-General, nothing but the transfer of the government could answer the ends proposed; and "he renewed that proposition with an earnest request that the Nabob would take it into his cool and dispassionate consideration." The Nawab, still venturing to declare it "extraordinary, that no other mode could be devised," for the rectification of what was amiss, entreated to be furnished with a statement of the revenues, of the demands of the English, and of the balance which would remain for his subsistence, after deduction of them was made. By the account which was delivered to him, it appeared that he would receive 62,366 rupees, per annum. The Nawab offered little further objection. Some moderate requests which he preferred were liberally granted. And a treaty was concluded on the 4th of June, 1802, by which the country was ceded in perpetuity to the English, but instead of the balance of the revenues, a fixed sum of one lac and 8000 rupees per annum was settled on the Nawab.

"It may be proper," says the Lieutenant-Governor, in concluding his report, upon this transaction,

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

to the Governor-General, "to observe, that Khirudmund Khan (the Regent) has afforded me no assistance towards obtaining the Nawab's consent to the cession, although upon his arrival at Bareilly, he confessed himself to be aware of the necessity of it.—I have great reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the Nawab; who, if he had been suffered to follow the dictates of his own judgment, would, I am persuaded, have acceded to your Lordship's proposals with very little hesitation. He has invariably expressed himself desirous of promoting your Lordship's views, by all the means in his power." The ground, then, upon which the necessity of taking the country was founded; namely, the bad character of the Nabob; was discovered, and that before the conclusion of the business, to be false.[1] "It is satisfactory," says the Lieutenant-Governor in another despatch, "to reflect that the transfer of the province of Furruckabad has not been less beneficial to the interests of the Nabob than to those of the Company. Previously to my departure from the ceded provinces, I had an interview with the Nabob at Furruckabad, who expressed himself highly gratified by the arrangement which had taken place; and whose respectable appearance, surrounded by his family and dependants, formed a striking contrast with the state of degradation in which he appeared, when the affairs of Furruckabad were administered by his uncle, the Nabob Khirudmund Khan."[2] It is curious enough to observe the doctrine which is held forth by the Anglo-Indian government. Uni-

[1] Papers, ut supra, xii. 9—28.
[2] Ibid. i. 36.

formly, as they desire to transfer the sovereignty of any prince—the Nabob of Furruckabad, the Nabob of Oude, the Nabob of the Carnatic, the Raja of Tanjore,—to themselves, they represent it as no injury to the Prince to be deprived of his sovereignty, but, on the other hand a benefit, and a great one, if they are allowed to live upon a handsome income, as private men. Do the East India Company, and the servants and masters of the East India Company, limit their doctrine to the case of East India Princes, or do they hold it as a general doctrine, applicable to Princes in every part of the globe?

In what was called the settlement of the country, for which the Lieutenant-Governor was specially appointed, the principal duty which he prescribed to himself, the principal duty which was expected of him, was to put in play the English machinery for the collection of the revenue. The English collectors were distributed; and, after as much knowledge as they could, by inquiry and personal inspection, obtain respecting the ability of the contributors, an assessment at so much per village was laid on the land; and the terms of it settled for three years. In some of the districts, in which the present desolation seemed easy to be repaired, an increase of rent was to be levied each succeeding year.

The Sayer, including duties of transit, and some other taxes, the Lieutenant-Governor found here to be characterized by the same inconvenience, which had recommended the abolition of them in Bengal; namely, great expense of collection, great vexation to the people, and little revenue to the government. He, therefore, took them away;

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. and established a regular custom-house tax, in their place.

1802. Salt, in the ceded districts, had heretofore only paid certain duties to the government; and was imported into the districts by dealers. These dealers are represented by the Lieutenant-Governor as few in number, able to support a kind of monopoly, and regulate the price at their will. The sale of salt was now erected into a monopoly in the hands of government. The Lieutenant-Governor calculated, that the profit to government, "without," he says, "*materially* enhancing the price to consumers," would be eleven lacs of rupees per annum.

The commercial resources of the country presented to the Lieutenant-Governor an object of particular care. There was no obstruction, but what might easily be removed, in the navigation of the Jumna, from its entrance into the country, to its junction with the Ganges. By removing the evils which had driven commerce from this river, piracy, and vexatious duties, he expected to increase exceedingly the commercial transactions of the country, and to render Allahabad, which was a sacred city of great resort, a remarkable emporium between the eastern and western quarters of Hindustan.[1]

The Commissioners of the Board of Settlement, in addition to their administrative duties, as assistants of the Lieutenant-Governor, were appointed the judges of circuit and appeal; and six judges, with the title of registrars, were destined to hold Zillah Courts, at the six principal places of the country.[2]

[1] Papers, ut supra, i. 31—42. [2] Ibid. p. 64.

In the new country were several Zemindars, who, as usual under the native governments, had enjoyed a sort of sovereignty, and of whom little more was exacted than an annual tribute, and sometimes the use of their troops in war. In the first year of the Company's possession, these Zemindars were only required to yield the same tribute which they had paid to the Vizir. To the alterations which were proposed in the second year, a Raja, named Bugwunt Sing, who possessed the two forts of Sasnee and Bidgeghur, and maintained an army of 20,000 men, showed an aversion to submit. He was given to understand, that in the terms no alteration would be made, and that non-compliance must be followed by the surrender of his forts. It was deemed a matter of more than ordinary importance to dispossess Bugwunt Sing of these two forts, both as they rendered him too powerful for a compliant subject, and as his example afforded encouragement to other Zemindars.

On the 12th of December, 1802, Lieutenant-Colonel Blair, with a force consisting of four troops of native cavalry, four battalions of native infantry, and a supply of ordnance, took a position about two miles distant from the fort of Sasnee. He was not ready to commence the operations of the siege till the 27th, when the approaches were begun, at the distance of 800 yards from the place. On the 28th the garrison began for the first time to fire. On the 30th, towards evening, a sally was made against the head of the trenches, and repulsed with a very trifling loss. On the 3rd of January, 1803, about the same time of the day, another sally was made on the trenches, by a large body of infantry, under cover of

BOOK VI CHAP. 9.

1802.

a heavy fire from the fort; but though some of the enemy rushed impetuously into the trenches, they speedily retired. The breaching and enfilading batteries were completed on the night of the 4th. It was found necessary to increase the force, employed in the reduction of the Raja. The 4th regiment of native cavalry, the 2nd battalion of the 17th regiment, and five companies of his Majesty's 76th regiment were added; and the Honourable Major General St. John was sent to take the command. On the evening of the 14th, Lieutenant-Colonel Blair, judging the breach to be practicable, selected fifteen of the flank companies for the assault, and ordered them to storm a little before day-break, while a false attack was made on the opposite side of the fort. They descended into the ditch, and planted their ladders; but unhappily found that by the unexpected depth of the ditch, and the sinking of the ladders in the mud, they came short of the necessary length by several feet. After an ineffectual endeavour to mount, and after the sepoys had remained fifteen minutes upon the ladders, exposed to a heavy fire, the party was withdrawn, with the loss of ten men killed, and somewhat more than double the number wounded.

The Commander-in-Chief repaired to Sasnee with the reinforcement of another regiment of cavalry; joined the besiegers on the 31st; ordered the approaches to be advanced 200 yards, and the place to be invested as closely as possible. On the 8th, the town adjoining the fort was taken. The enemy defended it feebly; but made a strong, though unsuccessful, attempt, to recover it the following night.

About eight o'clock on the evening of the 11th,

1802

the garrison evacuated the fort without being perceived. As soon as the event was known, a party of cavalry hastened, and with some success, to prevent them from getting into the fort of Bidgeghur. The Raja withdrew to a fort, which belonged to him, within the line of the Mahratta frontier.

The army proceeded on the 13th, and summoned Bidgeghur, which the commander, without the consent of his master, declined giving up. Weather being adverse, the batteries were not ready till the morning of the 21st. On the evening of the 27th, the breach was made practicable, and at five o'clock in the morning, the assault was to begin; but during the night, exceedingly dark and rainy, the garrison were discovered evacuating the fort. Though many were killed, the majority, and all the principal leaders escaped. The loss during the siege was trifling, but Lieutenant-Colonel James Gordon, an officer of merit, was killed by the explosion of a powder-magazine in the fort, the morning after it was taken.[1]

In the month of March, the commission appointed for the provisional government of the ceded provinces was dissolved; Mr. Wellesley resigned his situation of Lieutenant-Governor; and immediately returned to Europe. In a despatch, dated 19th of November 1803, the home authorities declare their entire approbation of the late transactions with the Vizir; "the stipulations of the treaty being calculated to improve and secure the interests of the Vizir, as well as those of the Company;" nay more, "to provide more effectually hereafter for the good government of

[1] Papers, ut supra, Supplement, No. 2, to vol iii.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1802.

Oude, and consequently for the happiness of its inhabitants." "We cannot conclude," they say, "without expressing our satisfaction, that the cessions in question have been transferred, and provisionally settled, with so little delay, as already to admit of their being brought under the general administration of the Bengal government. The special commission, at the head of which Mr. Henry Wellesley was placed, appears to us to have executed their trust, with zeal, diligence, and ability; and the settlement of the revenue, which they have concluded for a period of three years, holds out flattering prospects of future increase. The general report, delivered in by Mr. Wellesley, on the termination of his mission, has afforded us much satisfactory information with respect to the resources of the upper provinces; and we are happy to take this occasion of approving the conduct, and acknowledging the services of that gentleman."[1]

As the temptation of administrators to exaggerate the success of their measures is almost irresistible; as the distance of Indian administrators affords them, in this respect, peculiar advantages; and as it is pleasing to be led by flattering representations, this is a deception against which the public, as yet, are by no means sufficiently on their guard. "It is with the highest degree of satisfaction," says the Governor-General in Council, in a despatch in the revenue department, to the home authorities, dated the 20th of October, 1803, "that his Excellency in Council acquaints your Honourable Court, that the wisdom of those measures, adopted during the administration

[1] Papers, i. 58.

of Mr. Wellesley, for promoting the improvement and prosperity of the ceded provinces, appears to have been fully confirmed, by the tranquillity which has generally prevailed through the country, and by the punctuality and facility with which the revenue, on account of the first year of the triennial settlement, has been realized."[1] From such a representation as this, every man would conclude, that great contentment and satisfaction prevailed. Hear Mr. Ryley, who was appointed judge and magistrate of the district of Etawah, in February, 1803, and there remained till 1805. Being asked, as a witness before the House of Commons, on the 20th of June, 1806, "Were the Zemindars, and higher orders of the people attached to our government, during the whole period you were judge and magistrate of the Etawah district?"—he answered; "Generally speaking, I believe the higher orders of people in our district were not at all well-inclined to the British government.—Do you not believe that they are ripe for a

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 46. "The satisfaction," says the judicial letter from Bengal, in the department of the ceded provinces, dated on the same 20th of October, "generally manifested by all descriptions of persons in the ceded provinces, at the transfer of these provinces to the authority of the British government, and the uninterrupted success which attended the measures adopted under the sanction of the Governor-General in Council, by the late Lieutenant-Governor, and the Board of Commissioners, for the complete establishment of the authority of the British government in these provinces, appeared to his Excellency in Council to leave no room to doubt of the expediency of immediately introducing into the ceded provinces the system of internal government established in Bengal. It is with the highest degree of satisfaction, His Excellency in Council is enabled to add, that the tranquillity which has in general prevailed throughout the country, and the submission and obedience, manifested by all classes of people to the authority of the laws, afford abundant proof, both of the beneficial operation of the new form of government, and of the expediency of its introduction." Supplement, ut supra, p. 301.

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1803

revolt if a favourable opportunity should offer?—They certainly showed that disposition once or twice during the time I held that office.—During your residence there, did the inhabitants become more, or did they become less reconciled to the British government?—I conceive they were subsequently much less reconciled, certainly, than they were at first.—To what cause do you attribute that?—To their being dissatisfied with the rules and regulations introduced into the country for their government.—Did that prevail principally among the Zemindars, or the inhabitants in general?—The inhabitants, in general, are so influenced by the conduct and desires of the Zemindars, who are independent princes, that their desire is principally that of the head men.—Do you consider that the Zemindars, while they were nominally under the Nabob, considered themselves as independent princes, and acted as such?—Certainly, they considered themselves as independent princes."[1] It by no means follows, that any blame was due to the government, on account of the disaffection of the Zemindars; because they were dissatisfied, from the loss of their power; and so long as they retained it, good government could not be introduced. Yet a desire existed, on the part of administration, to conceal the fact, to conceal it probably even from themselves.

After several manifestations of a refractory spirit, the Zemindar of Cuchoura agreed to deliver up his fort. On the 4th of March, 1803, an English captain, and two companies of sepoys, were admitted

[1] Minutes of Evidence, p. 54—59.

within the outer wall, when the army of intimidation, which had accompanied them, was withdrawn. After they had been delayed, under various pretences, for several hours, a gun was run out from the upper fort to a position in which it could rake the passage in which the sepoys were drawn up, and the parapets of the walls on each side, were lined immediately with about eight hundred armed men; when a message was received from the Zemindar, that unless they retired, they would all be destroyed. As nothing could be gained by resistance, the commanding officer obeyed, and was not molested in his retreat. When the army had taken up its position before the place, the Zemindar wrote a letter, in which he affirmed, that he had been treated with indignity by the gentlemen who had arrived to demand surrender of the fort, that hostilities were begun by the English troops, and that so far from intentions of war, he was ready to yield implicit obedience. After what had happened, he was told, that nothing would suffice but the unconditional surrender of himself and all that appertained to him. The trenches were begun on the night of the 8th; the breaching battery opened on the morning of the 12th; and before night, had made such progress, that with two hours more of daylight, the breach would have been effected. Between seven and eight o'clock in the evening, the enemy rushed from the fort, with a resolution to force their way through the chain of posts which surrounded them. They were attacked, and pursued for several miles with considerable slaughter. The principal loss of the English was in Major Nairne, an officer of the highest promise, who was killed by a

BOOK VI CHAP. 9. 1803.

matchlock ball, as he was leading his corps to the charge.[1]

The evidence of disaffection in the ceded districts broke out, in a manner somewhat alarming, at the commencement of the Mahratta war. On the 4th of September, 1803, a party of Mahrattas, led by a French officer, made an incursion in the neighbourhood of Shekoabad, in the district of Etawah. Mr. Ryley is asked by the House of Commons, "Did the Zemindars and the other people not show an inclination to join him?" He answered, "They not only showed an inclination, but they actually did join him."[2]

The Raja Chutter Saul possessed the fort of Tetteeah, and had not only shown a refractory, but a predatory disposition; he was therefore considered in rebellion, and a reward offered for his person, either dead or alive. On the 30th of September, Lieutenant-Colonel Guthrie marched to Tetteeah; and, as it had been dismantled by a detachment of the British army a few months before, expected to take it by assault. After a severe contest of some hours, he was overpowered by the enemy, and sent a message to Captain Dalston to hasten to his relief. On the arrival of that officer, he found the force under Colonel Guthrie completely broken, and sheltering themselves in the ditch, immediately under the wall of the fort: while the people within, not able to take aim at them

[1] Papers, ut supra, Supplement, No. 2, to vol. iii.

[2] Minutes of Evidence, p. 55. "From the general spirit of revolt which the Zemindars of this country exhibited, on the small check which our troops received at Shekoabad, &c." says a letter of Captain M. White commanding at Etawah, dated 12th September, 1803. Papers, ut supra, Supplement, No. 2, lo vol. iii.

with their matchlocks, were throwing powder-pots, which exploded among them in the ditch, and the people of the surrounding villages were assembling to attack them from without. Captain Dalston with his field-pieces soon cleared the tops of the walls; and enabled Colonel Guthrie and his party to make their escape from the ditch. The loss was serious, Colonel Guthrie and three other English officers were wounded, the first mortally. Of the native officers nearly one third were either killed or wounded. They were unable to bring off either their gun or tumbril, of which the one was spiked, the other blown up. On the following night, the enemy evacuated the fort, and the Raja fled to the other side of the Jumna.

Whatever belonged to the offenders was, in these cases, taken, as forfeited to the government; for their persons, all the more eminent among them found the means of escape.[1]

[1] Minutes of Evidience, p. 55.—M. Whatever may be thought of the means by which possession of these districts was obtained, the occurrences narrated in the text are strong proofs that the change of masters was for the benefit of the country. It was quite impossible for any government to subsist where every petty chief intrenched himself in his castle, and was able to set his liege lord at defiance. It required the power and vigour of the British government to put an end to this state of anarchy in the Doab.—W.

CHAPTER X.

The Nabob of Surat deposed.—The Raja of Tanjore deposed.—The Nabob of Arcot deposed.—[The Governor-General resigns.]

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

THE city of Surat, situated in the province of Gujrat, on the south side of the river Taptee, was by far the greatest place of maritime commerce in India, when the Europeans first discovered the passage by the Cape of Good Hope. Communicating easily with some of the richest provinces of the Mogul empire, it was conveniently situated not only for the traffic of the western coast of India, but, what was at that time of much greater importance, the trade of the Persian and Arabian gulfs. As it was the port from which a passage was most conveniently taken to the tomb of the prophet, it acquired a peculiar sacredness in the eyes of Mussulmans, and was spoken of under the denomination of one of the gates of Mecca. It acquired great magnitude, as well as celebrity; for, even after it had confessedly declined, it was estimated in 1796 at 800,000 inhabitants; and though it is probable that this amount exceeds the reality, Surat may at this time be regarded as the largest city in India. When the votaries of the ancient religion of Persia, of which the

Zend, and its commentary the Pazend, are the inspired and sacred books, were driven from Persia, and the tolerating policy of Akbar drew a portion of them to India; Surat, as the most celebrated landing-place from Persia, became the principal place of their abode; and there, about 14,000 of their descendants still preserve their manners, and adhere to their worship.

The present fort or castle of Surat was erected about the year 1543, when Sultaun Mohammed Shah was King of Gujrat. As this kingdom soon after yielded to the Mogul arms, Surat became subject to the government of Delhi. It fell in with the Mogul policy, to separate the administration of the city, from the government of the castle. The Governor of the castle, and its garrison, were maintained by lands or jaghires, and tunkas or assignments on the revenue. The Governor of the town received the customs, or taxes on exports and imports; the taxes called mokaats, on almost all commodities; and the land revenue, subject to certain deductions for the Delhi treasury, of some surrounding districts.

For the maritime protection of the western side of India, the Mogul government established a fleet. Its expense, in the whole or in part, was defrayed by assignments on the revenues of Surat. Some time after the command of this fleet had fallen into the hands of the chiefs called the Siddees of Rajapoor, or about the year 1734, the Mahrattas, carrying their conquests over almost all the province, reduced the revenues of Surat to the taxes levied

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

within the town, and the produce of a few remaining districts. The Nabob of Surat, thus straitened in his resources, began to fail in his payments to the fleet. Thereupon the Siddee blockaded the port; and compelled him to appropriate to those payments the revenue of the principal district from which any land revenue was now derived, as well as a considerable part of the duties collected within the town. In the year 1746 died the Nabob Teg Beg Khan, and was succeeded in the Nabobship by Sufder Khan, whose son, Vukar Khan, entered at the same time upon the government of the castle. But Mea Achund, who had married into the family of the late Nawab, and was supported by his widow, and some of the leading men, contrived to possess himself of the castle, to the expulsion of Vukar Khan. He also applied to the Mahratta, Damagee, the ancestor of the present Gaekwar princes; and promised him a portion of the revenues of Surat, if aided by him in expelling also the Nabob of the town. By this, commenced the Mahratta chout, which was afterwards shared with the Peshwa. An officer, as collector of chout, was established on the part of the Peshwa, and another on the part of the Gaekwar princes, who, under the pretence of its affecting the revenues, and hence the Mahratta chout, interfered with every act of administration, and contributed to increase the misgovernment of the city. Even when the English, at a much later period, conceived the design of forcing upon the Nawab a better administration of justice, they were restrained by fear of the Mahrattas, to whom the

chout on law-suits (a fourth part of all litigated property was the fee for government) was no insignificant portion of the exacted tribute.

Mea Achund succeeded in expelling the Nabob of the city ; was himself after a little time compelled to fly ; but a second time recovered his authority, which he permanently retained. Amid these revolutions, however, the government of the castle had been acquired by the Siddee. But the use which he made of his power was so oppressive to the city, that several invitations were soon after made to the English to dispossess him ; and take the command both of the castle and the fleet. Fear of embroiling themselves with the Mahrattas, and the danger of deficient funds, kept the English shy till 1758, when an outrage was committed upon some Englishmen by the people of the Siddee, and all redress refused. The Nabob agreed to assist them in any enterprise against the Siddee, provided he himself was secured in the government of the town. A treaty to this effect, reserving to the English the power of appointing a naib or deputy to the Nawab was concluded on the 4th of March, 1759 ; and on the same day the Siddee agreed to give up the castle and the fleet. Sunnuds were granted from Delhi, vesting the Company with the command and emoluments of both ; in consequence of which, the Mogul flag continued to fly on the castle, and at the mast-head of the Company's principal cruiser on the station. The annual sum, allotted by the sunnuds for the expense of the castle and fleet, was two lacs of rupees ; but the sources from which it

was to be derived were found to be far from equal to its production.

1800. In 1763, the Nawab Mea Achund died; and, under the influence of the Bombay government, was succeeded by his son. In 1777, the office of Naib was wholly abolished, by consent of the Company; and its funds transferred to the Exchequer of the Nabob.

Another succession took place in 1790, when the father died, and the son, in right of inheritance, avowed by the English government, ascended the musnud. His right was exactly the same as that of the other governors, whose power became hereditary, and independent, upon the decline of the Mogul government; that of the Subahdars, for example, of Oude, of Bengal, and the Deccan, or the Nawab of Arcot, acknowleged and treated as sovereign, hereditary princes, both by the English government, and the English people.

The expense which the English had incurred, by holding the castle of Surat, had regularly exceeded the sum, which, notwithstanding various arrangements with the Nabob, they had been able to draw from the sources of revenue. Towards the year 1797, the English authorities, both at home and at the spot, expressed impatience under this burden, and the Nawab was importuned for two things; the adoption of measures for the reform of government in the city; and an enlargement of the English receipts. The expedient in particular recommended, was, to disband a great proportion of his own undisciplined soldiery, and assign to the English funds sufficient

for the maintenance of three local battalions. "The Nabob," says Governor Duncan, "betrayed an immediate jealousy of, and repugnance to, any concession; as well on the alleged ground of the inadequacy of his funds; as of the principle of our interference with his administration; which he declared to be inconsistent with the treaty of 1759." Notwithstanding this, he was induced, after a pressing negotiation, to consent to pay one lac of rupees annually, and to make other concessions to the annual amount of rather more than 30,000 rupees. But on the 8th of January, 1799, before the treaty was concluded, he died. He left only an infant son, who survived him but a few weeks: and his brother, as heir, laid claim to the government.

The power of the English was now so great, that without their consent it was vain to hope to be Governor of Surat; and it was resolved, on so favourable a conjuncture, to yield their consent, at the price alone of certain concessions. These were, the establishment of a judicature, and the payment of a sufficient quantity of money. The negotiation continued till the month of April, 1800. The chief difficulty regarded the amount of tribute. Importunity was carried to the very utmost. The re-establishment of the naibship was the instrument of intimidation; for the right of the claimant was regarded by the Bombay government as too certain to be disputed. Governor Duncan, in his letter to the English chief at Surat, dated 18th April, 1799, describing a particular sum of money as no more than what the Nabob ought to give, to ensure his succession, and prevent the English from appointing

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

a naib, adds, "which we have as clear a right to do, as he has to become Nabob; or to enjoy the fruits of our protection to his family and himself. Both points stand equally specified in the treaty." With regard to the right, however, of re-establishing a naibship, after having sanctioned its abolition, the case was by no means clear. The Court of Directors, in their letter to the Bombay Presidency, dated the 17th of February, 1797, had declared, "Although it cannot be denied that the present Nabob, his father, and his grandfather, owed their elevation to the influence of the Company; we doubt our right to impose upon the Nabob an officer under this denomination; from the consideration that the first naib, nominated by the Company's representatives in 1759, was appointed under an express article of a written agreement with the then Nabob Mea Achund, and that upon the death of a second naib the office was consolidated with the office of Nabob, and was not renewed upon the succession of the present Nabob." With regard to the right of inheritance in the present claimant, beside the declarations of Governor Duncan, of which that above quoted is not the only one, Mr. Seton, the chief at Surat, in his letter to Mr. Duncan, of the 26th of December, 1799, says, "The Supreme Government determined the musnud to be the hereditary right of his brother, and from that decision, consequently now his established inheritance."

The claimant consented to pay a lac of rupees annually, but perseveringly insisted that beyond that sum the revenues of the place would not enable him to go. After every mode of importunity was ex-

hausted, and every species of inquiry was made, Mr. Seton became satisfied, that his statement was just, and on the 18th of August, 1799, wrote to the Governor of Bombay in the following words: "I have left nothing undone; and pressed him to the utmost. I am convinced he has not the means, or believe he really would pay more. Poor Mr. Farmer has been led into a false opinion of the resources of Surat; and I could almost venture to stake my life on it, that more than the lac is not to be got by any means short of military force. Take the Government from the family, and pension them (though such a measure would, in my humble opinion, be contrary to good faith), I scarce believe, after all endeavours, that the Company with these pensions, and the increased necessary establishments, would be more in pocket, than they will now with their present establishment and this donation. What were the views of the Company in possessing themselves of the castle? Whatever they were, they are not altered, and they were then satisfied with the castle, and tunka revenue, which is only diminished from a decrease of trade; and here a lac is unconditionally offered, which exceeds the amount of castle and tunka revenue by 25,000 rupees per annum; yet the present government are not satisfied therewith, and still want more; which cannot be raised, if the Nabob does not squeeze it out of the subjects."

A despatch from the Governor-General, dated 10th March, 1800, was in due course received, which ordered the Nawab to be immediately displaced, and the government and revenues to be wholly assumed by the English. This was the most unce-

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

remonious act of dethronement, which the English had yet performed; as the victim was the weakest and most obscure. Some of the explanations with which this command was accompanied are not much less remarkable than the principal fact. Not negotiation, but dethronement, would have been adopted from the first, except for one reason, namely, a little danger. "The exigencies of the public service," says the Governor-General, "during the late war in Mysore, and the negotiations which succeeded the termination of it, would have rendered it impracticable for your government to furnish the military force, indispensably necessary for effecting a reform of the government of Surat, even if other considerations had not rendered it adviseable to defer that reform until the complete re-establishment of tranquillity throughout the British possessions in India." It is here of importance, once more, to remark upon the phraseology of the Governor-General. To dethrone the sovereign, to alter completely the distribution of the powers of government, and to place them in a set of hands wholly different and new, though it constituted one of the most complete revolutions which it is possible to conceive, was spoken of as a "reform of the government."

The reasoning, by force of which the Governor-General claims the right to make such a reform, ought to be heard. "On a reference," says he, "to the treaty of 1759, concluded with Mayen-ed-din, we find that it was only a personal engagement with that Nabob, and that it did not extend to his heirs. Independent of the terms of the treaty, the discussion which passed in 1793, on the death of Mayen-ed-din,

as well as the letter from your government, dated the 25th of March, 1790, when the office of Nabob again became vacant, prove it to have been the general sense, that the operation of the treaty of 1759 ceased on the demise of Mayen-ed-din. The power of the Mogul having also become extinct, it follows, that the Company not being restricted, with respect to the disposal of the office of Nabob, by any specific treaty, are at liberty to dispose of it as they may think proper."

Here two things are assumed; first, that the English of that day were not bound by the treaty of 1759; the second, that, wheresoever not bound by specific treaties, the English were at liberty to dethrone any sovereign whom they pleased; or, in the language of the Governor-General, "to dispose of the office of Nabob, as they may think proper.' Upon no part of this reasoning is any comment required.[1]

Attention is also due to the conduct of the Bombay rulers. Governor Duncan, and Mr. Seton had, both of them, previously declared their conviction of the clear right of the Nabob, not only to the Nabobship by inheritance, but to the support and alli-

[1] To say that the English were at liberty to dethrone any sovereign they pleased is not putting the case fairly. The Nabob of Surat was no sovereign, but an usurping officer of the Mogul empire. Suppose that by any political vicissitude, the king of Delhi had been restored to the power of Akbar or Aurungzeb, would he not have been entitled to displace, and even punish, the Nabob of Surat, unless that officer had returned to his subordinate position? The English had appropriated, in this part of India, the possessions and authority of the Mogul, and had, therefore, the same rights over Surat. It was in this case, as in many others, not their ambition, but their moderation, that involved them in embarrassment and inconsistency.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1800.

ance of the English, by a treaty which their acts had repeatedly confirmed. Yet, no sooner did they receive the command of the Governor-General to dethrone him, than they were ready to become the active instruments of that dethronement, and, as far as appears, without so much as a hint, that in their opinion the command was unjust.

The Governor-General next proceeds to say, that the sort of government which was performed by the Nabob was exceedingly bad. Neither was the defence of the city from external enemies in a tolerable state; nor was its internal government compatible with the happiness of the people, under the prevailing "frauds, exactions, and mismanagement in the collection of the revenue, the avowed corruption in the administration of justice, and the entire inefficiency in the police. "It is obvious," he continues, "that these important objects," namely, the security and good government of Surat, "can only be attained by the Company taking the entire civil and military government of the city into their own hands: and consequently," he adds, "it is their duty, as well as their right, to have recourse to that measure."

Here again we see the doctrine most clearly avowed, and most confidently laid down as a basis of action, that bad government under any sovereign constitutes a right, and even a duty, to dethrone him;[1] either in favour of the East India Company alone, if they ought to have the monopoly of

[1] It should rather be stated, the mal-administration of a subordinate functionary constitutes a right and duty to dismiss him; this is not quite the same thing as the right to depose independent sovereigns.—W.

dethronement; or in favour of mankind at large, if the privilege ought to be as diffusive as the reason on which it is founded.

It being deemed, by the Governor of Bombay, that his own presence would be useful for effecting the revolution at Surat, he left the Presidency in the end of April, and arrived on the 2nd of May. After endeavouring to secure the co-operation of the persons, whose influence was most considerable on the mind of the Nawab, he opened the business to that ruler himself, on the 9th, and allowed him till the 12th to deliberate upon his answer. At the interview, on that day, the Nawab declared; that he could not survive acquiescence in the demand; not only from a sense of personal degradation; but from the odium he must incur among all Mussulmans, if he consented to place the door of Mecca in the hands of a people who had another faith. The steps necessary for accomplishing the revolution without regard to his consent, were now pursued; and preparations were made for removing his troops from the guard of the city, and taking possession of it, by the Company's soldiers, the following morning. In the mean time, the reflections of the Nawab, and the remonstrances of his friends, convinced him that, opposition being fruitless, submission was the prudent choice; he therefore communicated to the Governor his willingness to comply, and the treaty was mutually signed on the following day. It had been transmitted by the Governor-General, ready drawn; and was executed without alteration. The Nabob resigned the government, civil and military, with all its emolu-

ments, power, and privileges, to the East India Company. And on their part, the Company agreed to pay to the Nabob and his heirs one lac of rupees annually, together with a fifth part of what should remain, as surplus of the revenues, after deduction of this allowance, of the Mahratta chout, and of the charges of collection.

When the powers of government were thus vested in English hands, establishments were formed for the administration of justice, for the superintendence of police, for the collection of the revenue, and for the provision of the Company's investment. For this purpose, the Governor-General had given two leading directions; the first was, that each of these departments should be committed to distinct persons; and the second, that the powers vested in the several officers should correspond as nearly as possible with those of the corresponding officers in Bengal. They have, therefore, no need of description.

Though stripped of all the powers of government, and a mere pensioner of state, it was still accounted proper for Meer Nasseer ad Dien to act the farce of royalty. His succession to the musnud of his ancestors was now acknowledged by the English government, and he was placed on it with the same pomp and ceremony, as if he had been receiving all the powers of soverignty, on the day after he had for ever resigned them.

The great difficulty was, to obtain deliverance from the misery of the Mahratta chout. The Gaekwar prince expressed the greatest readiness to compliment the Company, to whom he looked for

protection, with the share which belonged to him. With the Peshwa, the business was not so easily arranged.[1]

In the despatch of the Court of Directors, dated "Political Department, 18th October, 1797," and addressed "to our President in Council at Fort St. George," they say, "We have requested Lord Mornington to make a short stay at Madras, previous to his proceeding to take upon himself the Government-General of Bengal, for the purpose of endeavouring to prevail on the Nabob of Arcot to agree to a modification of the treaty with his highness in 1792." Lord Hobart had just been recalled, because he differed with the Government-General of that day, in regard to some of the expedients which he adopted for the attainment of this modification.[2] The Directors, notwithstanding, go on to say, "It were to be wished that the zealous endeavours of Lord Hobart, for that purpose, had proved successful; and as, in our opinion, nothing short of the modification proposed is likely to answer any beneficial purpose, Lord Mornington will render a most essential service to the Company, should he be able to accomplish that object, or an arrangement similar thereto. But feeling, as we do, the necessity of maintaining our credit with the country powers, by an exact observance of treaties—a principle so honourably established under Lord

[1] See a folio volume of 535 pages, of papers relating to this transaction solely, printed by order of the House of Commons, dated 14th July, 1806, and furnished with a copious table of contents, by which every paper, to which the text bears reference, will be easily found.—M. See also Dispatches, ii. 222, 259, 708.—W.

[2] Vide supra, p. 69.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1800.

Cornwallis's administration—we cannot authorize his Lordship to exert other powers than those of persuasion to induce the Nabob to form a new arrangement."[1] It is sufficiently remarkable to hear ministers and directors conjunctly declaring, that "the principle of an exact observance of treaties" still remained to "be honourably established," at the time of Lord Cornwallis's administration. It was the desire of credit with the country powers, that now constituted the motive to its observance. But if the Company when weak could disregard such credit with the country powers, they had much less reason now to dread any inconvenience from the want of it. Besides, the question is, whether the country powers ever gave them, or gave any body, credit for a faith, of which they can so little form a conception, as that of regarding a treaty any longer than it is agreeable to his interest to do so.

In a letter in council dated Fort William, 4th July, 1798, the home authorities are told, that "immediately on his arrival at Fort St. George, the Governor-General lost no time in taking the necessary steps for opening a negotiation with the Nabob of Arcot, with a view to the accomplishment of your wishes, with regard to the modification of the treaty of 1792—The Governor-General, however, found his Highness so completely indisposed to that arrangement, as to preclude all hopes of obtaining his consent to it at present." The letter then promises,

[1] Papers relating to the affairs of the Carnatic, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, in August, 1803, i. 243.

at a future day, a detailed acccount of the communications which had passed between the Governor-General and Nabob: but this was never sent.[1]

In 1799 the Governor-General, when he was again at Madras, and war with Mysore was begun, thought another favourable opportunity had arrived of urging the Nabob afresh on the subject of changes so ardently desired. The treaty of 1792 gave a right to assume the temporary government of the country on the occurrence of war in the Carnatic. To this measure the Nawab and his father had always manifested the most intense aversion. It was hoped that the view of this extremity, and of the burden of debt to the Company, with which he was loaded and galled, would operate forcibly upon his mind. The Governor-General accordingly proposed that he should cede to the Company, in undivided sovereignty, those territories which were already mortgaged for the payment of his subsidy, in which case he would be exempted from the operation of the clause which subjected him to the assumption of his country; while it was further proposed to make over to him, in liquidation of his debt to the Company, certain sums, in dispute between them, to the amount of 2,30,040 pagodas.

These conditions were proposed to the Nabob by letter, dated the 24th of April. The Nabob answered by the same medium, dated the 13th of May. The season for alarming him, by the assumption of his country, was elapsed, Seringapatam being taken,

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 204.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1800.

and the war at an end. The Nabob, therefore, stood upon the strength of his treaty, which he represented as so wise, and so admirable, that no change could be made in it without the sacrifice of some mutual advantage; that, even if the assumption of his country were necessary, which, thanks to the Divine mercy, was at present far from the case; nay, "were the personal inconvenience ten times greater," the sacrifice would be cheerfully made, "rather than consent to the alteration of the treaty, even in a letter." Besides, there were other engagements, by which the Nabob must ever hold himself inviolably bound. These were, respect for "the loved and revered personages" by whom the treaty was framed, and the dying commands of his honoured father, to which he had pledged a sacred regard. He also plied the Governor-General with an argument, which to his mind might be regarded as peculiarly persuasive—an argument drawn purely from parliamentary stores—experience against theory: "I cannot," said he, "overlook a circumstance, which, in affairs of this sort, must naturally present itself to the mind of your Lordship; that the treaty, which is now suggested to be defective, has had a trial, my Lord, of more than seven years; and, without a single exception, has been found, for that period, not only sufficient for all common purposes, but has secured the fulfilment of every condition stipulated in it, with an harmony uninterrupted; and perhaps, I might add, almost unprecedented in any country or age."[1]

The Court of Directors, in their political letter to

[1] Papers, ut supra, p, 213—216.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 10.

1800.

Fort St. George, dated the 5th of June, 1799, say, "We have been advised, by the Earl of Mornington, that the Nabob continues to oppose a determined resolution to the modification of the treaty of 1792, which has been repeatedly proposed to him. At the same time, we observe, that his Highness has distinctly acknowledged, that he is in the practice of raising money annually by assignments of the revenues of those districts, which form the security for the payment of the Company's subsidy." They add, "As this practice is unquestionably contrary to the letter, and subversive of the spirit of that treaty, we direct, that, immediately upon the receipt hereof, you adopt the necessary measures for taking possession, in the name of the Company, of the whole, or any part, of the said districts, the revenues of which shall appear to be so assigned; and that you continue to hold the same, and collect the rents thereof, in order that the Company may not in future be deprived of the only security which they possess, under the before-mentioned treaty, to answer any failure in the Nabob, in the discharging his subsidy. You will immediately communicate to the Nabob the determination we have come to, and the orders you have received relative to this point."[1]

The affirmation, relative to the assignments on the districts in pledge, is contrasted with the following affirmation of the Nabob, in his letter of the 13th of May, just quoted, in which he answers the proposal and reasonings which the letter of the Governor-General had pressed upon his mind: "I do most

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 216.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

unequivocally assure your Lordship, on the word and faith of a sovereign, that no one foot of the districts set apart by the treaty of 1792 have been, or are, in any manner or way, directly or indirectly, assigned by me, or with my knowledge, to any individual whatsoever; and, having made this solemn and unreserved declaration, I would hope, that I need not urge more."[1]

With respect to the command of the home authorities, to take possession of the districts, and all the rest of their expedients, the Governor of Fort St. George, on the 11th of April, 1800, writes, "Your letter to the Governor-General, dated the 16th June 1799, is still under his Lordship's consideration. But it is material for me to repeat—and with impressive earnestness, that no security, sufficiently extensive and efficient, for the British interest in the Carnatic, can be derived from the treaty of 1792; and that no divided power, however modified, can possibly avert the utter ruin of that devoted country."[2]

On the 13th of June, 1799, the home authorities wrote to the Governor-General, "In the event of a war with Tippoo Sultaun, the respective countries of the Nabob of Arcot, and the Raja of Tanjore, will of course come under the Company's management: and we direct, that they be not relinquished, without special orders from us, for that purpose; in order to afford sufficient time for the formation of arrangements for relieving those respective princes from all incumbrances upon their revenues." Upon this subject the Governor-General writes, on the 25th of

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 214.

[2] Ibid, p. 216.

1800.

January, 1800, "The short duration of the war rendered it inexpedient for me to assume the management of the respective countries, of the Nabob of the Carnatic, and of the Raja of Tanjore, on behalf of the Company.—The immediate effect of such an assumption would have been, a considerable failure of actual resource, at a period of the utmost exigency. I shall hereafter communicate my sentiments at large, with respect to the state of Tanjore, and the Carnatic. The latter now occupies my particular attention; and I fear that the perverse councils of the Nabob of Arcot will prove a serious obstacle to any effectual improvement of your affairs in that quarter."[1]

Tuljajee, the Raja of Tanjore, died in 1786, and was succeeded by Ameer Sing, his son. The conduct of this prince gave so little satisfaction to the English, that, after the peace of Seringapatam, which Lord Cornwallis concluded with Tippoo in 1792, they deliberated concerning the propriety of trusting him any longer with the civil administration of the country. But the supreme government "were of opinion, that, under all the circumstances in which the question was involved, it would be more suitable to the national character, to hazard an error on the side of lenity, than to expose themselves to the imputation of having treated him with excessive rigour." Accordingly, a treaty was concluded with him, dated the 12th of July, 1793, and his country, which, like the Carnatic, had been taken under English management during the war, was restored to him, in as full possession as before.

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 217.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

In the year 1798, a convenient discovery was made; that Ameer Sing was not the legal heir to the musnud of Tanjore; but Serfojee, the adopted son of Tuljajee. The question of the rights of these two princes remains in obscurity. The documents have not yet been made accessible to the public; and we know not upon what grounds the decision was formed.[1] This only we know, that it was determined to dethrone Ameer Sing, and to set up Ser-

[1] The circumstances of this case were so remarkable that it is rather extraordinary the author should not have heard of them, and failed to trace a more particular account. The discovery was not made in 1798. The points in dispute were well known at Amar Sing's accession, but a judgment was then pronounced, which subsequent investigations, resumed in 1794, and terminated only in 1797, led both Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore to consider as erroneous, and at the latter date it was pronounced to be so by the Court of Directors. Amar Sing was the half-brother of Tuljajee: the latter, when dying in 1787, adopted Serfojee as his son, placing him under the private guardianship of the celebrated missionary Swartz, and the public tutelage of his brother. Upon the Raja's death, the validity of the adoption was disputed on three grounds, the imbecile state of the Raja's mind, the age of the boy, ten years, which it was affirmed exceeded that legally qualifying him for adoption, and his being an only son, which was also held a legal disqualification. Upon the two latter grounds the Madras Government, with the approbation of that of Bengal, cancelled the adoption, and placed Amar Sing upon the Musnud.

The cruel treatment of Serfojee by the Raja was repeatedly brought to the notice of the British authorities by the vigilance of his reverend guardian; and upon his representations, and those of the Resident, the Madras Government insisted upon the removal of Serfojee and the surviving widows of Tuljajee, who were also objects of the Raja's oppression, to Madras. This took place in 1793, and was followed immediately by an appeal to the Government against its former decision adverse to Serfojee's pretensions. The question was fully entered into by Sir John Shore, and as opinions were received from various Pundits of learning and character, which interpreted the law in favour of the adoption, the British authorities had no other alternative than to correct an error of their own commission, and restore Serfojee to that throne, of which they had, in the mistaken belief that they were acting according to the law, deprived him. It was not for their own convenience, therefore, that they deposed Amar Sing and set up Serfojee in his stead, although it was true that the change was for the better, as the administration of Amar Sing had been most injurious to the resources of Tanjore. The particulars of these transactions are

fojee in his stead. Serfojee was obviously in a situation to submit implicitly to any terms which the English might think proper to prescribe. After some months, therefore, of preparation, a treaty was concluded with him, dated the 25th of October, 1799, by which he resigned for ever all the powers of government to the English, and received a pension of one lac of star pagodas, with a fifth of the net revenues.[1]

On the 7th of April, 1800, the Governor-General forwarded to the Governor of Fort St. George, certain letters and papers, found by the English in the palace of Seringapatam. These documents related to a correspondence of the two Nabobs of Arcot, the father and the son, with the Sultan of Mysore. The Governor-General directed Lord Clive to proceed, without loss of time, in conducting an inquiry into the circumstances of which the papers appeared to afford indication, and in particular transmitted a list of witnesses whose evidence was to be carefully and zealously collected. In the mean time, he himself had completely prejudged the question; and did what depended upon him to make Lord Clive prejudge it in a similar manner. "A deliberate consideration," says he, in the very letter which directed inquiry, "of the evidence resulting from the whole

interestingly and authentically related from the correspondence of Swartz and the records of the India House, by the venerable missionary's biographer, Dr. Pearson. Life of Swartz, ii. 132, 263, and 314. Raja Sarbojee, as he is more accurately named by Bishop Heber, was visited by that prelate in 1826, and is described by him as combining many of the best traits of the native character with European tastes and habits. Letter to R. V. Horton, Esq., Heber's Journal, ii. 459. See also Disp. i. 41, and v. 47.—W.

[1] See certain documents in the Second Report of the Select Committee, 1810, p. 234—242.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

of these documents has not only confirmed, in the most unquestionable manner, my suspicions of the existence of a secret correspondence between the personages already named, but satisfied my judgment, that its object, on the part of the Nabobs Wallajah and Omdut ul Omrah, and especially of the latter, was of the most hostile tendency to the British interests.—The proofs arising from the papers would certainly be sufficient to justify the British government, in depriving that faithless and ungrateful prince, of all means of rendering any part of the resources of the territories, which he holds under the protection of the Company, subservient to the further violation of his engagements, and to the prosecution of his desperate purposes of treachery and ingratitude."[1]

However, the Governor-General thought, it would, notwithstanding, be more consonant with "the dignity, and systematic moderation of the British government," not to take the country from its prince, till some inquiry had first been made. But he says, "Although it is my wish to delay the actual assumption of his Highness's government until that inquiry shall be completed, I deem it necessary to authorize your Lordship to proceed immediately to make every arrangement preparatory to that measure, which now appears to have become inevitable."[2]

Nothing surely ever was more fortunate than such a discovery at such a time. This the Governor-General has the frankness to declare. "While those orders, lately conveyed by the Honourable

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 2. Also Dispatches, ii. 254, and App. 740.
[2] Ibid. p. 3.

Court of Directors relative to the Company's connexion with the Nabob, were under my consideration, a combination of fortunate circumstances revealed his correspondence."[1] When the Governor-General, and all his superiors, and all his subordinates, in the government of India, were languishing and panting for the possession of the Carnatic, but afraid, without some more plausible reason than they yet possessed, to commence the seizure, here it was provided for them in extraordinary perfection. But the very circumstance which recommended it to the eager affections of the East India functionaries, will recommend it to the rigid scrutiny of those whose minds are more happily situated for appreciating the facts.

The documents on which so extraordinary a value was set by the Governor-General, consisted almost entirely of certain things picked out from a mass of correspondence which purported to have passed between the "Presence" (the title which Tippoo bestowed upon himself), and the two vakeels, Golam Ali Khan, and Ali Reza Khan who accompanied, in 1792, the hostage sons of the Sultaun to Madras. Besides these, only two letters were produced; one from a subsequent vakeel of Tippoo at Madras; another, supposed to be from Omdut ul Omrah, but under a fictitious name.

It is proper to ascertain the value of one circumstance, on which those who are not partial to the British character will not fail to animadvert. As the British government was situated with respect to the

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 4.

papers of Tippoo, it was, it may be affirmed, the easiest thing in the world to procure evidence for any purpose which it pleased: And I wish we could say that civilization and philosophy have made so great a progress in Europe, that European rulers would not fabricate a mass of evidence, even where a kingdom is the prize. The time is so very recent, when such expedients formed a main engine of government, and the progress in political morality appears to be so very slow, that it would be utterly unsafe to proceed upon the supposition that forgery is exploded as an instrument of government. Yet in the case of the British government, so much the greater number of those employed in carrying it on would probably refuse to share in the fabrication of a mass of evidence, that the small number of individuals who might have no insuperable objection to it would find it, in few cases, easy; in most, impossible, to accomplish their purpose. With regard to Lord Wellesley, even his faults bear so little affinity with this species of vice, and his most conspicuous virtues are so directly opposed to it, that we may safely infer it to be as unlikely in his case, as in any which can well be supposed, that he would fabricate evidence to attain the objects of his desire; notwithstanding the violence with which he was apt to desire, and the faculty which he possessed of persuading himself, that every thing was righteous by which his desires were going to be fulfilled.

But an argument, more conclusive than any argument from character, either national or individual, can almost ever be, at any rate to strangers, and those whose partiality one has no reason to expect,

is this: That the papers prove nothing; which most assuredly would not have been the case, had they been fabricated for the purpose of proving. On the other hand, if they had exhibited a proof which was very strong and specific, it would have been no easy task, after the very exceptionable manner in which they were examined, to have proved that all suspicion of them was utterly groundless.

Among the objects recommended to the vakeels who accompanied the sons of Tippoo to Madras, one, very naturally, was, to communicate to him useful intelligence of every description. They had even a particular commission with regard to secret intelligence, in which a delineation of the defensive works of Fort St. George was particularly included; and they were furnished with a cipher for carrying it on.

With other articles of intelligence, which the vakeels availed themselves of their situation to transmit to their royal master, an account was given of the deportment of the Nabob of Arcot, towards the princes, and towards themselves; and of the conversations which took place between them. The letters relating to this subject were those which were regarded as affording evidence against Wallajah, the deceased, and Omdut ul Omrah, the reigning, Nabob.

It is to be remarked, that Lord Cornwallis, after he had reduced Tippoo to a situation, in which he regarded him as too weak to be any longer formidable, adopted the liberal design of conciliating his mind, and gaining it, if possible, by a respectful, generous, and even flattering style of intercourse, to

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

a state of good will toward the English nation. The same course he recommended to the Nabob Wallajah, who had suffered so deeply by the raising of Tippoo's house, and towards which he had often manifested so great a degree of contempt and aversion.[1]

There were various circumstances which just at that time induced the Nabob to follow these injunctions of the Governor-General with great alacrity. The fame and authority of Tippoo were now sufficiently high to render his friendship an object of importance. The Nabob of Arcot, on the other hand, felt himself in a state of degradation, and reduced to a cipher among the princes of India. It soothed his vanity to hold some intercourse with as many of them as possible; and not least with one who now occupied so large a space in the eye of the world as the Sultaun of Mysore. It increased his dignity and consequence, when he induced other princes to use towards him the language of friendship, and to treat him as a prince upon a level with themselves. This rendered it more difficult for the English to accomplish their design of divesting him, as he dreaded, of all his sovereign powers, and reducing him and his family to the condition of mere pensioners of state. He seems, accordingly, to have been very eager, to add the forms of a confidential intercourse with Tippoo, to the other circumstances which held him forth to the world as a sovereign prince, and which

[1] This recommendation may have been given, but the only evidence for it, which is here received without question, appears to be that of one of the Nawab's officers, under suspicious circumstances, on attempting to vindicate his master from the charge of treacherous correspondence with the Vakeels. See subsequent page.—W.

he regarded with justice as the only barrier between him and dethronement.

1800.

Attentions to the princes while at Madras, with assurances of his favourable sentiments towards the Sultan, and of his ardent desire of a suitable return, were the expedients of which he made use. Oriental expressions of compliment are all extravagant, and hyperbolical; and we cannot, on such an occasion, suppose, that the Nabob would use the most feeble and cold. Another circumstance of great importance to be remembered was, that the letters contained not the expressions of the Nabob, but only the expressions of the vakeels reporting them; and that Indian agents, reporting to their principals, seldom pay any regard to realities, but, as far as they can go with advantage to themselves, heighten whatsoever they think will be agreeable to their master, extenuate whatsoever they think he will dislike. Now, when all the expressions which the vakeels of Tippoo report to have been used by the Nabob and his son are tortured to the utmost, nothing can be extracted from them but declarations of friendly sentiments, in an hyperbolical style. Even the Persian translator of the English government, who drew up a report upon the documents, highly praised by the Governor General, and in which every effort is made to draw from them evidence of guilt, has the candour to say, "The accuracy of reports from agents, natives of India, to their principals, cannot, under any circumstances, be implicitly relied on; and, in one of the reports of the vakeels which contains the substance of a conference between themselves, the princes, and the Nabob, at which

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1800.

Colonel Doveton was present, a speech is ascribed to that gentleman which is evidently fabricated; a circumstance which tends to weaken the validity of all their reports;—and if the evidence of the Nabob's conduct rested solely upon them, the proofs might be considered as extremely defective and problematical."[1]

Thus far, then, the ground is clear. But, beside the reports of the vakeels, what further proof is alleged? There are the letters of Tippoo, and the key to the cipher. The letters of Tippoo contain no more than a return to the civil expressions of the Nabob; vague declarations of good will, couched in a similar style. The key to the cipher shows that Wallajah was designated by the term *Well-wisher of mankind,* the English by that of *New Comers,* the Nizam by that of *Nothingness*, the Mahrattas that of *Despicable;* and so on. And this is the whole matter of evidence which the papers contained.

To establish still further the dark designs which the Governor-General firmly concluded that a few hyperbolical expressions had already proved, a list of nine witnesses was transmitted to Madras, of whom the two vakeels, Golam Ali Khan, and Ali Reza Khan, were the chief. A commission consisting of two of the most approved servants of the Company, Mr. Webbe, the secretary to the Madras government, and Colonel Close, were selected to conduct the investigation. Every precaution was taken, such as that of preventing communication between the witnesses, to get from them either the evidence pure, or the means of detecting its impurity.

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 14.

It was resolved to begin with the two vakeels, who of course could best elucidate their own correspondence. To form a proper judgment of their testimony, several circumstances ought to be remarked. In the first place, they were Orientals; that is, men, accustomed, in the use of language toward those on whom their hopes and their fears depended, to regard very little the connexion between their words and the corresponding matters of fact, but chiefly the connexion between those words, and the impression, favourable or unfavourable, which they were likely to make on the minds of the great persons, on whose power the interests of the speaker most remarkably depended. In the second place, it is impossible to conceive any dependence more abject, than was, at this time, the dependence of the Khans, Golam Ali, and Ali Reza, upon the English government. The government, under which they had found employment, was totally destroyed. Every source of independent subsistence was cut off; they lived upon a pension which they received from the English government, and which it was only necessary to withhold, to plunge them into the deepest abyss of human misery. They had every motive which interest could yield, to affirm what would be agreeable to the English government. They could have no interested motive to speak what would be agreeable to Tippoo, Wallajah, or Omdut ul Omrah. In these circumstances, if they had given a testimony in every respect conformable to the wishes of the English government, what depended upon their affirmation would have been regarded as of little or no value by any impartial

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

judge. But in as far as they gave a testimony in opposition to those wishes, that is, in opposition, as they must have believed, to their own interests, their testimony has some of the strongest possible claims upon our belief.

Every thing was done to remove any obstructions which might exist in the minds of the witnesses to the production of such evidence as was expected. They were given to understand that no blame would be attached to them, who only acted under legitimate orders, for their instrumentality in the designs of their master. And they were assured in the strongest language, that any appearance of a design to conceal the truth, and they well knew what eastern rulers were accustomed to call the truth, would be visited upon them with all the weight of English indignation.

Of the two vakeels, Ali Reza was residing at Velore, Golam Ali at Seringapatam. As least remote, Ali Reza was examined first. In him, the examining commissioners say, in their report to the Governor, " we think it necessary to apprize your Lordship that we discovered an earnest disposition to develop the truth. Golam Ali they accused of base endeavours at concealment. The evidence of both, taken together, tends not to confirm one single suspicion, if any could have been justly derived from the papers, but to remove them, every one.

They both distinctly and constantly affirmed, that the expressions of good will towards Tippoo, made use of in their hearing by Wallajah or his son, were never understood by them in any other sense than that of vague compliments. Ali Reza gave testimony

to another point, with regard to which the Persian translator, commenting on his evidence, thus declares: "In the report of the Persian translator," namely, the report on the documents, "it has been observed, that the expressions of attachment and devotion, ascribed by the vakeels to the Nabob Wallajah, and Omdut ul Omrah, are probably much exaggerated; and that little dependence ought to be placed upon the existence of facts, inferred merely from such expressions; this conjecture is confirmed by Ali Reza Khan, who acknowledges they were much exaggerated, and that it was customary with the vakeels to heighten the expressions of regard, which fell from Lord Cornwallis, or the Nabob Wallajah, for the purpose of gratifying the Sultan; and observed very justly that the people of this country constantly exaggerate their expressions of regard to an extravagant degree."[1]

The vakeels reported several expressions of the Nabob, complimenting the Sultan as a pillar of the faith, and admiring the union of mussulmans; certain articles of intelligence which he was described as conveying; and expedients of secrecy which he was described as having employed. All this, however, is only the report of the vakeels, which is acknowledged to be incapable of proving any thing, and which, as it forged a speech for Colonel Doveton, would just as probably forge for the Nabob and his son. But the circumstances, even if the statement of them is supposed to be just, afford no ground for an inference of guilt. To call

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 47.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1800.

Tippoo a pillar of the Moslem faith, one of the most flattering of all compliments to his bigoted mind, was not criminal; nor to speak with approbation of the union of Moslems, which might be an exhortation to the Sultaun to favour the Nabob, that is, the English, who always represented their interests as the same with his.

The articles of intelligence which he is said to have conveyed are exceedingly trifling; and have at any rate the appearance of having been conveyed for a good, not for an evil purpose; for the preservation of that harmony between Tippoo and the English, which at that time the English had very earnestly at heart. Having learned, that suspicions were caused, by some intercourse which appeared to take place between the Mysore and Mahratta Durbars, the Nabob sent him his advice, that it would be better he should desist, and suspend his negotiations, at least during the administration of Marquis Cornwallis. Again, having learned the existence of a French war, and that Pondicherry was about to be attacked, the Nabob sent his advice to the Sultaun to withdraw his vakeel from Pondicherry, and to intermit all correspondence with the French. This is the whole of the intelligence, the conveyance of which was construed into direct acts of hostility.

A few expressions of want of regard for the English, mixed in the reports of the vakeels, hardly deserve attention; both because nothing was more likely to be inserted by the vakeels, they knowing nothing much more likely to be agreeable to their master; and because, if the attachment of the Nabob to the English had been ever so entire, it was per-

fectly in character with oriental sincerity, to affect to despise and abhor them, in order to conciliate a mind by which it was known they were disliked.

As to the appearance of a concern about secrecy, it is well known to be a feature of the human mind in the state of civilization under which the Sultaun and Nabob were educated, and in India to a singular degree, to make a great affectation of secrecy on very trifling occasions; and, for the show of importance, to cover every thing as much as possible with a veil of mystery. Under the designation of "*the affair you know*," something was mentioned in the letters of Tippoo and the vakeels; and under this mysterious appellation the deepest villany was supposed to be couched. On this, after examining their witnesses, the commissioners report, "We have the honour to inform your Lordship, that the expression of '*the affair known of*,' so frequently repeated in the correspondence, appears to refer to the subject of a proposed connexion by marriage between the families of Tippoo Sultaun and the Nabob Wallajah."[1]

On two occasions, while the vakeels remained at Madras, the Nabob made appointments for meeting with them secretly. But both of them persisted in steadily affirming, as witnesses, that nothing passed beyond general professions of regard. The affectation of a wish to conceal from the English the warmth of the attachment he professed, might well be one of the artifices made use of by the Nabob for extracting those appearances of regard from the Sultaun, which

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 36.

it was at this moment his interest to obtain. In exact conformity with this idea, he made offer, upon the departure of the vakeels from Madras, to establish a cipher for the purpose of secret communication. But so little value did the Sultaun attach to any expected communication from the Nabob, that he treated this proposal with total neglect; than which a stronger proof can hardly be expected of the innocence of all the communications which from that quarter he had ever received.

The commissioners say, "We examined Gholam Ali Meer Suddoor, the Dewan Purniah, and the Moonshee Hubbeeb Olla," that is, the men above all others acquainted with the secrets of Tippoo's government; "but as their testimony did not establish any fact, we thought it unnecessary to record their evidence."[1]

Not only does this evidence afford no proof of a criminal correspondence with Tippoo, on the part of the Nabob; but the total inability of the English to produce further evidence, with all the records of the Mysore government in their hands, and all the living agents of it within their absolute power, is a proof of the contrary; since it is not credible that a criminal correspondence should have existed, and not have left more traces of itself.

It is just to bewail the unhappy situation, in which the minds of Englishmen in India are placed. Acted upon by circumstances which strongly excite them,

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 39.—The papers from Seringapatam, and the examination of the witnesses, are in a collection of House of Commons "Papers concerning the late Nabob of the Carnatic, ordered to be printed 21st of June, 1802;" the rest of the documents are in the volume of papers quoted immediately above.

their understandings are dragged, like those of other men, towards a conformity with their desires; and they are not guarded against the grossest illusions of self-deceit by those salutary influences which operate upon the human mind in a more favourable situation. The people of India among whom they live, and upon whom the miserable effects of their delusion descend, are not in a situation to expose the sophistry by which their rulers impose upon themselves. They neither dare to do it, nor does their education fit them for doing it, nor do they enjoy a press, the instrument with which it can be done. Their rulers, therefore, have no motive to set a guard upon themselves; and to examine rigidly the arguments by which they justify to themselves an obedience to their own inclinations. The human mind, when thus set free from restraint, is easily satisfied with reasons for self-gratification; and the understanding waits, an humble servant, upon the affections. Not only are the English rulers in India deprived of the salutary dread of the scrutinizing minds, and free pens, of an enlightened public, in the regions in which they act; they well know, that distance and other circumstances so completely veil the truth from English eyes, that, if the case will but bear a varnish, and if they take care to stand well with the minister, they have in England every thing to hope, and seldom any thing to dread, from the successful gratification of the passion of acquiring.

It is most remarkable, that of all the Englishmen in India, of whose sentiments upon the occasion we have any record, the Governor-General and his council, the Governor of Fort St. George and his

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1800.

council, the examining commissioners, and the Persian translator, the very foremost men in India, not one appears to have doubted, that the evidence we have examined established undeniably the facts which they so eagerly desired to infer.[1]

The examination of the witnesses was closed, and the report of the commissioners drawn up, and signed at Seringapatam, on the 18th of May, 1800.[2] It was not till the 28th of May, 1801, that any further instructions of the Governor-General were despatched. In the memorable document of that date, addressed to Lord Clive, he states one reason of delay, as follows: "The critical situation of the negotiation depending with the Nizam, appeared to me to render it advisable to postpone the adoption of measures required for the

[1] A disposition to disbelieve is quite as likely to misjudge the weight of evidence as a disposition to believe. Scepticism is as unpropitious as credulity to the appreciation of truth. It may be admitted, that upon the face of the correspondence little appeared to convict the Nawabs of the Carnatic of actual treachery against the British Government, yet there can be little difficulty in crediting that they entertained hostile sentiments towards it, or that they expressed those sentiments to Tippoo's vakeels. It is possible that the vakeels exaggerated the expressions of the Nawabs to gratify their master, but it cannot be reasonably doubted by any who know the passion of native princes for intrigue, and the intense detestation borne by all Indian Mohammedans towards their Christian masters, that much that was conveyed to Tippoo by his agents, was said and intended by Walajah and his son. The inferiority of Tippoo's origin was a much greater bar to any cordial intercourse between the Nawabs and the Sultan; but that would probably have given way before community of religious intolerance, if the former could have anticipated any prospect of benefit to themselves from the latter's success. Although, then, the correspondence with Tippoo may not substantiate any conspiracy against the English power, it is impossible to question the inference that is reasonably drawn from it, an inference which scarcely required such testimony:—That no reliance could be placed upon the fidelity or attachment of the Nabobs of Arcot. Their political position and their religious creed rendered them irreconcileable foes, and with this conviction it would have been folly to have intrusted them longer with any degree of political power.—W.

[2] Dispatches, ii. 515.—W.

security of the Carnatic. The successful issue of that negotiation appeared likely to facilitate the arrangements which became indispensably necessary in the Carnatic; while a premature prosecution of these arrangements might have impeded, and perhaps frustrated, the successful issue of the negotiation at Hyderabad." Another reason was, that for some time he indulged the hope of being able to employ the weight of his own presence, in removing the obstacles which he expected to oppose the intended revolution in the Carnatic. When that hope was relinquished, he desired that Mr. Webbe, the chief secretary to the government at Madras, might join him in Bengal, to communicate a more minute knowledge of circumstances than he could otherwise acquire.

"The delay," says the Governor-General, "which has occurred, has enabled me to receive the sentiments of the President of the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India, and of the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, on the subject of the correspondence of the late and present Nabob of Arcot with Tippoo Sultaun: Those sentiments entirely accord with your Lordship's, and with mine, on the same subject."

He proceeded to declare, that from the evidence which we have examined, he confidently inferred the existence of a criminal correspondence between the Nabob and Tippoo; and that the measure which, in consequence, he resolved to adopt, was the dethronement of the Nabob, and the transfer of his sovereignty to the Company.

An attempt, however, was still to be made, to obtain an appearance of the Nabob's consent to his

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1801.

own degradation. "I consider it," says the Governor-General, "to be extremely desirable, that the Nabob should be induced to accede to the proposed arrangement, in the form of a treaty. In order to obtain his Highness's acquiescence in this mode of adjustment, it will be proper for your Lordship, after having fully apprized the Nabob of the nature of the proofs which we possess of his correspondence with Tippoo Sultaun, to offer the inducement of the largest provision to be made for his Highness's personal expenses, and in that event I authorize your Lordship to insert in the treaty the sum of three lacs of pagodas."

The Governor-General had no very sanguine hopes, that the Nabob would smooth all difficulties by resigning the dignity to which he clung. He gave directions therefore on the contrary supposition, and said, "If the Nabob, Omdut ul Omrah, by refusing to acquiesce in the proposed arrangements, should compel the British government, contrary to its wishes and intentions, to exercise its rights and its power to their full extent, I authorize and direct your Lordship to assume the civil and military government of the Carnatic."

The Governor-General anticipated even another contingency. "It is possible," says he, "that in the actual state of his Highness's councils and temper, the Nabob may be disposed to appeal to the authority of the Honourable the Court of Directors." Well, and what was his Excellency's determination in that event? "Being already," said he, "in possession of the sentiments of the Secret Committee, founded on the discovery of the Nabob's faithless conduct, I shall consider it to be injudicious and unnecessary to admit

BOOK VI
CHAP. 10.

1801.

the appeal; and by that admission to enter upon a formal trial of his Highness's criminal conduct."[1]

Now, finally, the case stood, therefore, as follows. In a dispute, in which the Company, or their representatives, the rulers in India, on the one hand, and the Nabob on the other, were parties, and in which a great kingdom was at issue, the first of the parties not only resolves upon deciding in its own cause, which in the case of disputes about kingdoms can seldom be avoided, but, upon a mass of evidence of its own providing, evidence altogether *ex parte*, evidence which it examined by itself and for itself, and upon which it put any construction which it pleased, did, without admitting the opposite party to a hearing, without admitting it to offer a single article of counter-evidence, to sift the evidence brought to condemn it, or so much as to make an observation upon that evidence, proceed to form a decision in its own favour, and to strip the opposite party of a kingdom. It is perfectly obvious, that, upon principles of judicature such as these, a decision in favour of the strongest will seldom be wanting.

Had the actions of the Nabob corresponded with the inference which the English rulers so eagerly drew, their conduct would still have implied a most extraordinary assumption. The principle of their conduct was, that, if an Indian prince did any injury, or but showed that he meditated injury, to the English, that moment the English were entitled to dethrone him, and take his kingdom to themselves. If the Nabob had actually contracted an alliance offensive and defensive with Tippoo, he was not a subject of

[1] For the above extracts, see papers, vol. i. ut supra, p. 42—47.

1801.

the British government; he was a sovereign prince; and the utmost such an action implied was a violation of the treaty which subsisted between the English and him. But all that is necessarily done by the violation on one side of a treaty between sovereign states, is only to relieve the party on the other side from all the obligations which it imposed; to leave the two parties, in short, in the same situation, in which they would have been, if the treaty had not existed. It may happen, that, in such a case, it would be improper, in the obeying, so much as to make war upon the infringing party. That would entirely depend upon other questions, namely, the refusal of redress for injury, or of security against indubitable danger. But, even when war takes place, and two princes stand in the relation of active enemies, it is not the principle of just and polished nations to push the warfare to dethronement; nor can it ever be any thing but the height of injustice to carry hostilities beyond the line of redress for indubitable injury, and security against indubitable danger. How the assumption of the English, in the case before us, can be reconciled with these established principles, it is not difficult to determine.[1]

[1] The conclusions are wrong because the premises are so. The Nabob had never been a sovereign prince. The ministers of the British crown had, indeed, most impolitically and mistakingly treated him in that capacity, but the history of his connexion with the Company was an irrefutable argument of their error. The Nabob of the Carnatic was originally nothing more than an officer of the Subahdar of the Dekhin, appointed and removed at the pleasure of his superior. That he had been rendered independent of the Subahdar was not even his own act, it was the work of the English; he owed every thing to their protection; he was their creature, not their equal. The dispute lay not between two potentates of independent origin and power, but between the master and servant—the sovereign and the subject. The timidity and the ignorance of the superior had suffered the inferior to appropriate what did not appertain to him,

As if aware, after all, how little all other pleas were qualified to support the measure which he was eager to pursue, the Governor-General forgot not his standard reason for the dethronement of princes; namely, the badness of their government. He affirmed, that no other expedient, but the dethronement of the Nabob of Arcot, and the total transfer to the English of the government of the Carnatic, afforded any chance for that reform which the impoverishment of the country, and the misery of the people, so forcibly required. Here, at last, he obtained a ground, on

and had recognised pretensions to which he had no claim. That is no reason why the error was to be perpetuated, or that it should not be remedied when it was discovered. The established principles which regulate even hostilities between sovereign states were here inapplicable,—for the sovereign state was one, there were not two sovereign states, consequently there could not be hostilities between them. Whatever may be the law of nations in regard to the treatment of independent sovereigns, it will scarcely be denied that the sovereign has a right to degrade a refractory or rebellious dependant. It is true, however, that the Governor-General deprived himself of any advantage from this view of the case, by treating the Nawab as a sovereign prince in alliance with the English. He observes: 'The case requires that we should act as against a state, on the basis of the general law of nations, and that we should employ the power of the British empire in India to demand, and if necessary, to enforce an adequate security for our rights and interests against the machinations of a faithless ally, who has violated the fundamental principles of a public alliance to the extent of placing himself in the light of a public enemy.' Dispatches, ii. 523. This means, it is to be presumed, that a sovereign who is an enemy, and who is too weak to resist, may be deprived of his sovereignty; but even if this doctrine were generally true, which it is not, the public hostility of the Nawab of the Carnatic had not been so decisively manifested as to justify such extreme punishment. The inconsistencies and unsoundness of many of our attempts to vindicate our political measures in India are undeniable. It would have been more honest and honourable to have confined ourselves to the avowal that the maintenance of the British dominion in India was the main-spring of all our policy. It might also have been safely asserted, on this occasion at least, that the interests of the people demanded the separation of the double administration of the affairs of the Carnatic, and an end being put to the misgovernment of the Nabobs of Arcot.—W.

1801.

which, if the end for which government was instituted, and for which it ought to be upheld, is worthy of being regarded, he might stand with perfect assurance. Though we may suspect the servants of the Company of some exaggeration, when they describe the horrible effects of the Nabob's administration, there is no doubt that they were deplorable: It is equally certain, that no considerable improvement could be introduced, while the powers of civil administration remained at the disposal of the Nabob: And, though what the Company had attempted for improving the condition of their subjects, where they possessed the undivided powers, had hitherto displayed but little either of skill or success, some efforts had been nobly intended, and will doubtless be followed by more judicious expedients. Even under the bad system of taxation, and the bad system of judicature which the English would employ, the people would immediately suffer less than under the still more defective systems of the Nabob; and they would reap the benefit of all the improvements which a more enlightened people may be expected to introduce. On this ground, we should have deemed the Company justified, in proportion as the feelings of millions are of more value than the feelings of an individual, in seizing the government of the Carnatic long before; and, on the same principle, we should rejoice, that every inch of ground within the limits of India were subject to their sway. In matters of detail, I have more frequently had occasion to blame the Company's government than to praise it; and, till the business of government is much better understood, whoever writes history with a view solely to

the good of mankind, will have the same thankless task to perform; yet I believe it will be found that the Company, during the period of their sovereignty, have done more in behalf of their subjects, have shown more of good-will towards them, have shown less of a selfish attachment to mischievous powers lodged in their own hands, have displayed a more generous welcome to schemes of improvement, and are now more willing to adopt improvements, not only than any other sovereign existing in the same period, but than all other sovereigns taken together upon the surface of the globe.

When the instructions for assuming the government of the Carnatic arrived at Madras,[1] the Nabob Omdut ul Omrah was labouring under an illness which he was not expected to survive. In these circumstances, the Governor forbore to agitate his mind with the communication of intelligence, which he was expected to receive with agony. On an occasion, when the whole family would naturally wish to be assembled, the younger son of the Nabob arrived from Trichinopoly with his attendants, who are not described as being either more numerous, or better armed, than those who usually escorted a person of similar condition. Upon a report to the Governor, that some of these attendants had been, or had been proposed to be, admitted into the palace of the dying Nabob, the Governor immediately concluded, that this was for some evil purpose unknown, and resolved to anticipate the effects, by taking possession of the palace immediately with an English

[1] Dispatches, 525, 533.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1801.

force. Communication was made to the Nabob, with all the delicacy of which the circumstances admitted, prevention of confusion at his death being the motive assigned; and the troops took a position commanding all the entrances into the palace without resistance or commotion. The commanding officer was directed "to exert his vigilance in a particular manner, to prevent the removal of treasure from the palace, sufficient grounds of belief existing that a considerable treasure, a large sum of money, had been accumulated by their Highnesses, the late and present Nabob."[1] The English, even yet, were but ill cured of their old delusion, that every Indian prince was enormously rich. Of this supposed treasure we perceive not another trace.

On the 15th of July, 1801, the Nabob Omdut ul Omrah died. Immediately a commission was given to the two gentlemen, Webbe and Close, to state to the family the crimes which were charged upon the two Nabobs deceased, and to demand, with information that a due provision would be made for their support, that their consent should be given to the destined transfer of the Carnatic government.

The business was urgent, and without permitting the lapse of even the day on which the sovereign had expired, the gentlemen repaired to the palace. They were met by some of the principal persons in the service of the late Nabob. They first requested to know if any particular arrangement had been traced by Omdut ul Omrah. Having been informed, that a will existed, they desired that it might be

[1] Such are the words of the Governor of Fort St. George, in a letter to Lord Wellesley, 7th of July, 1801; papers, ut supra, p. 65.

1801.

produced. Being informed that, without the violation of all decorum, the son and heir of the deceased could not be called upon to attend to ordinary business, before the ceremonies due to his royal father were performed, they replied that on ordinary occasions it was the principle of the English to respect the feelings of individuals, but, where this respect interfered with the business of a great government, the less must, in propriety, yield to the greater interest. The personages, who received their commands, retired to deliberate; and had not long returned with a declaration of submission, when the young Nabob was introduced, bearing the will of his father in his hand. The will directed, that Ali Hoosun, his eldest son, should succeed to all his rights, all his possessions, and "the sovereignty of the Carnatic:" and that the Khans, Mohammed Nejeeb, Salar Jung, and Tuckia Ali, the individuals now present, should be regents, to assist the young Nawab in the affairs of government, till his arrival at competent maturity of years.

The Nabob retired, and the commissioners desired, that the rest of the conversation should be private, between the regents and themselves. The pretended discoveries were described. The following passage, in the report of the commissioners, is memorable: "Nejeeb Khan expressed his surprise at this communication; professed his entire ignorance of the subject; and protested that it was impossible for the Nabob Omdut ul Omrah to cherish the intentions imputed to his Highness. Some of the principal documents having been produced, Nejeeb Khan asserted, that they contained none but expres-

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1801.

sions of civility and compliment; that the Marquis Cornwallis had repeatedly enjoined the Nabobs, Mohammed Ali, and Omdut ul Omrah, to cultivate a friendly intercourse with Tippoo Sultaun; that the whole tendency of the correspondence produced was directed to that object, in conformity to the injunctions of Lord Cornwallis; and that the Nabob Omdut ul Omrah had recently addressed himself to Lord Cornwallis on the subject of these communications. The particular warmth of the expressions used by Omdut ul Omrah, in his letter addressed to Gholam Ali Khan on the 14th Mohurrum, 1209, having been pointed out to Nejeeb Khan—he observed that it was nothing more than an expression of civility, which might have been used on any ordinary occasion." On the cipher, of which a proposal appeared to have been made to the Sultan, and which proposal he entirely disregarded, the Khan observed, "that the moonshee of the Nabob was present, and could be examined with respect to the authenticity of the hand-writing, that the cipher might have been conveyed into the archives of Tippoo Sultaun by the enemies of Omdut ul Omrah;" and concluded by a most important request, that the family should be furnished with the evidence, stated to exist, of the supposed criminal intercourse; have an opportunity of offering such explanations as they might be able to give, and of presenting such counter-proofs as they might have to furnish; when, said he, "the proofs being compared, the Company might form a complete judgment."

A more moderate proposition, on such an occasion,

was certainly never advanced. He did not so much as appeal from the judgment of an opposite party; he only requested that party to look first at both sides of the question. If the object had been to explore the truth of the accusation, it would have been easy to secure the papers of the late Nabob, in which, if no marks of a criminal correspondence existed, it would not be very probable that it had ever taken place.

"This discourse," say the commissioners, "being apparently intended to confound the object of our deputation."—yes, that object, to be sure, was a very different thing—"we stated to the two Khans, that the British government, being satisfied of the sufficiency of its proofs, had no intention of constituting itself a judge of the conduct of its ally." There is here one of the most astonishing instances, which the annals of the human mind can exhibit, of that blindness, which the selfish affections have a tendency to produce, when, unhappily, power is possessed, and all prospect both of shame and of punishment is removed. The British government had taken evidence upon the conduct of its ally, had pronounced a sentence of condemnation, and was proceeding, with impetuosity, to carry its decision into execution, yet it would not "constitute itself a judge of the conduct of its ally!" As if one was not a judge, so long as one abstained from hearing both sides of the question; as if, to all intents and purposes, saving only those of justice, it was not easy to be a judge upon very different terms!

The whole of the conference of this day, it appears, was spent, on the part of the Khans, in

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1801. "asserting their disbelief of the hostile intercourse with Tippoo; and insisting on the reasonableness of their entering into the defence of Omdut ul Omrah's conduct in regard to the several points in which he was accused." When the day was far advanced, they were permitted, on their earnest request, to retire for the purpose of making the necessary preparations for the funeral of the deceased Nabob, and a second interview was appointed for the evening of the following day.

At this meeting, the evils of a divided government, the abuses which prevailed, and all the other arguments, which had been so often urged to prevail upon the Nabobs to resign their authority, were stated to the regents; they were assured that no remedy would suffice, except the revolution proposed; and they were asked, whether they were prepared to enter into an amicable negotiation for that purpose. They remarked, that, "if the entire government of the Carnatic should be transferred to the hands of the Company, the station of Nabob of the Carnatic would be annihilated." The answer of the commissioners is memorable. It seems to prove, that the English in India have so long, and successfully, made use of fiction, that they take their own fictions for realities. The commissioners had the confidence to tell the regents, "that the rank and dignity of the Nabob of the Carnatic could not be injured," by actual dethronement. Nay, what is more, they state in their report, that the argument which they made use of to prove it, for they did not leave it without an argument, "was admitted by the Khans to be conclusive." The Khans, notwithstanding,

declined giving any answer, on a proposition of so much importance, till they got the benefit of consultation with the different heads of the family; and they were allowed till the next day to prepare for a final declaration.

On this occasion, they began by representing, that the whole family, and the ministers of the late Nabob, having been assembled to deliberate, had come to certain conclusions. All these persons were convinced, that the British government would not insist upon the utmost severity of the terms which had been recently announced; and they had ventured to propose a different plan, by which, in their opinion, the security, which was the professed aim of the Company, would be completely attained. Their proposition was, to give up the reserved sovereignty over the Polygars, and the right of collecting the revenues in the assigned districts, and along with this to make some better regulations in regard to the debts. The commissioners repeated that "the proposition for vesting exclusively in the hands of the Company the entire administration of the civil and military government of the Carnatic contained the basis on which alone the proposed arrangement could be founded." After strong expostulation, on both sides, the Khans declared, "that they were prepared to give a decided answer; and that the propositions which they had offered, and of which they delivered a written statement, contained finally, and unequivocally, the terms on which they could accede to an arrangement of the affairs of the Carnatic by negotiation."

The commissioners resolved to accept of an

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1801.

ultimate refusal from no lips but those of the Nabob himself. Upon their request, that he should be introduced, the Khans manifested considerable surprise; and expostulated against the proposition, on the ground both of decorum, from the recency of his father's death, and the immaturity of his judgment, at eighteen years of age. "It was not," say the commissioners, "without a very long and tedious conversation, that we obtained from the Khans the appointment of a time for our receiving, from the reputed son of Omdut ul Omrah, his own determination on the proposition communicated to the two Khans."

On the second day, which was the 19th of July, the projected interview took place. The proposition was re-stated, to which the acquiescence of the young prince was required; and the consequences held up to his view; the title of Nabob, with the dignity and emoluments of the head of the family, if he complied; the loss of all these advantages, if he refused. "He replied, the Khans being present, that he considered them to have been appointed by his father for the purpose of assisting him; and that the object of his own councils was not separate from that of the Khans." He was then given to understand that Lord Clive, the Governor, required an interview with him. To this proposition also the Khans manifested reluctance, but they were immediately informed that it was altogether useless. During a short absence of the Khans, for the purpose of preparing the equipage of the prince, "the young man," say the commissioners, "with much apparent anxiety in his manner,

whispered in a low tone of voice, that he had been deceived by the two Khans. Ali Hussain, accordingly, proceeded, without further communication with the two Khans, to the tent of the officer commanding the troops at Chepauk, at which place we had the honour of a personal interview with your Lordship." The attendants of the Prince, including even the regents, were ordered to withdraw. At this meeting, it appears that the prince was even forward to declare his disapprobation of the refusal given by the Khans to the proposition of his Lordship; and "proposed that a treaty should be prepared, upon the basis of vesting the entire civil and military government of the Carnatic in the hands of the Company; and stated, that he would be ready to execute the instrument, with, or without the consent of the Khans, at another separate conference, which was appointed, for the next day, within the lines of the British troops."

At that interview, however, Ali Hussain withdrew his acquiescence of the former day, which he described as the sudden and inconsiderate suggestion of the moment. He was again conveyed to a tent, to meet with Lord Clive, apart from his attendants and advisers. Being informed, that his sentiments of yesterday were understood to be still his real sentiments; that his altered declaration might be the offspring of fear; that he was at present, however, within the British lines; and, if it was necessary, should receive the effectual protection of the British power; he said that he acted under no constraint, and that the determination he had

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1801.

now expressed was that of his own deliberate, clear, and unalterable judgment. "It was then explained to him," say the commissioners, "that no pains had been omitted, which could warn him of the consequences he was about to incur; that the duties of humanity towards him, and the duties of attention to the national character of the British government, had been satisfied; that he had himself determined the situation in which he would hereafter be placed; and that your Lordship, with concern for himself individually, now apprized him that his future situation would be that of a private person, hostile to the British interests, and dependent on the bounty of the Company.—This declaration Ali Hussain received with a degree of composure and confidence which denoted that he acted from no impression of fear; and a smile of complacency which appeared on his countenance, throughout this discussion, denoted an internal satisfaction at the line of conduct he was pursuing. Being asked if he wished to make any further observation, he said that he did not; and being also asked whether he had any objection to the introduction of the Khans into the tent, he said that he had none; which being accordingly done, he was directed by your Lordship to leave the tent."

The British rulers had all along reserved to themselves an expedient against Ali Hussain, to wit, chicanery about his birth, and had regularly denominated him the reputed son of Omdut ul Omrah; though all that is stated is, that his mother, which, according to the mussulman law, is

a matter of indifference, was not the principal among the women in the zenana;[1] and though, at last, too, they precluded themselves from this pretence, by choosing him as the man with whom, in preference to all the rest of his family, they wished to negotiate, and at whose hands to accept the grant of the sovereignty.

Negotiation being in this manner closed, on the part of Ali Hussain, the son of Omdut ul Omrah; the English rulers directed their attention to Azeem ud Dowlah, a son of Ameer ul Omrah, who, since the death of his father, had been kept in a state of great seclusion and indigence. To make known the intention of dealing with him as successor to the Nabob might shorten his days. But the English soon found an occasion of delivering themselves from this difficulty. The family resolved to place the son of Omdut ul Omrah on the musnud, to which they held him equally entitled by his birth, and by the will of his deceased father. The English held it necessary to prevent that ceremony; for which purpose the troops, already commanding the entrance, took possession of the palace; and placed a guard of honour about Azeem ud Dowlah. He was not long kept ignorant of what was to be done with him. The forfeiture of the government by Omdut ul Omrah; and "that satisfaction and security," as they expressed it, which the English rulers "deemed to be necessary to the preservation

[1] Lord Mornington writes, "It is certain that the mother of the young man was of low origin, and that she was never married to the Nabob." This would affect his pretensions, according to the Mussulman law. Dispatches, ii. 249.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1801.

of their interests in the Carnatic," were explained to him; and he was asked whether, if acknowledged as the head and representative of the family, these were terms to which he would submit. He made as little difficulty in expressing his compliance as the circumstances in which he was placed gave reason to expect.[1] A reflection, however, suggests itself, which, at the time, the English rulers were probably too full of their object to make. If Azeem ud Dowlah had to the inheritance of the family any title whatsoever, beside the arbitrary will of the English rulers, his title stood exempt from that plea of forfeiture on which the measure of dethronement was set up. It was not so much as pretended that his father, Ameer ul Omrah, had any share in the pretended criminal correspondence of the late and preceding Nabob; and to punish a man for the sins of his grandfather, however it may be reconcileable with some systems of law, will not be denied, it is presumed, to be utterly irreconcileable with the essential principles of justice. Besides, though in a certain sense of the word, a prince may forfeit his crown to his subjects, it was not in the relation of subject and prince, that the British Company and the Nabob of Arcot stood; and in what sense it can be said that one prince forfeits his crown to another, it would not be easy to explain.

A treaty was immediately drawn up and signed, according to which all the powers of government were delivered over in perpetuity to the English,

[1] The report from which the above particulars and quotations are taken, is in the volume of papers (p. 8—25), ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 21st and 23rd of June, 1801.

and totally and for ever renounced by the Nabob. Yet such is the memorable harmony between the language which the English rulers desired to employ, and the actions they performed, that the first article of the treaty stands in the following words: "The Nabob Azeem ud Dowlah Behauder is hereby formally established in the state and rank, with the dignities dependent thereon, of his ancestors, heretofore Nabobs of the Carnatic; and the possession thereof is hereby guaranteed by the Honourable East India Company to his said Highness, Azeem ud Dowlah Behauder, who has accordingly succeeded to the subahdarry of the territories of Arcot."

As a provision for the new Nabob, including the maintenance of the female establishment, or Mhal, of his father, one fifth part of the net revenues of the Carnatic were pledged. The Company engaged to make a suitable maintenance for the rest of the family, and took upon itself the whole of the debts of the preceding Nabobs.[1]

Against this revolution there was transmitted to the home authorities a remonstrance in the name of the regents. A letter, as from the rejected Nabob, setting forth, in vehement and pathetic language, the proceedings which had taken place, and the cruel effects, as regarded himself, with which they were attended, was transmitted to two gentlemen in England, of the names of Hall and Johnstone, who acted there as agents of the deceased Nabob. The rest of the family continued to vent their indignation, in acts of disrespect to the new Nabob, and in such

[1] See the Treaty and Papers, ut supra, i. 74.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1801.

other demonstrations as they dared to risk. The displays of their dissatisfaction were sufficiently active and manifest to give not only displeasure, but some degree of disturbance to the government. In due time, the approbation of the Honourable the Court of Directors, a favour as often as acquisitions were made, not often denied, arrived in proper form. "We have been induced," said the Secret Committee, "to postpone expressing our opinion on the late important transactions in the Carnatic, from a desire to be previously furnished with every information which could bear in any material degree upon the question; and we have accordingly waited with impatience for a review of the circumstances which led to the late arrangement in the Carnatic, which the Governor-General, in his letter of the 28th of September, 1801, to the Secret Committee, acquainted us he was then preparing, and which he proposed to forward by the Mornington packet." The Mornington packet arrived, and the promised review was not received. It never was sent. The Directors accordingly were compelled to approve without it. "We do not," they say, "feel ourselves called upon to enter into a detail of the circumstances connected with this case; or to state at length the reasoning upon those circumstances which has led to the conclusion we have come to, after the fullest and most deliberate consideration. It is enough to state to you, that we are fully prepared upon the facts, as at present before us, to approve and confirm the treaty in question; and we are of opinion, that, acting under the instructions of the Governor-General, you stand fully justified, upon the evidence, written as

well as oral, on which you proceed, in deeming the rights of the family of Mohammed Ali, as existing under former treaties, to have been wholly forfeited by the systematic perfidy and treachery of the late Nabobs of the Carnatic, Wallajah, and Omdut ul Omrah, in breach of their solemn treaties with the Company. The claims of the family having been thus forfeited, and right having accrued to the Company of making provision, at their discretion, for the future safety of the Carnatic, we are further of opinion that the nature of the security which has been provided by the treaty, for the defence and preservation of our interests in that quarter, is of a satisfactory description."[1]

One expression alone, in this quotation, appears, on the present occasion, to require any comment. The Directors say, that the Nabob Mohammed Ali forfeited the rights which he enjoyed "under treaties with the Company" But surely his right to the throne of the Carnatic was not created by any treaty with the Company. It had for a long series of years been acknowledged, and proclaimed by the English, as resting on a very different foundation. At the commencement of their political and military operations in the Carnatic, the right of Mohammed Ali by inheritance, to the musnud of his ancestors, was the grand plea which they made use of against the French; and a zeal for the rights of the lawful Prince, was one of the colours with which they were most anxious to adorn their conduct. If, by the violation

[1] Letter from the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 29th of September, 1802, to the Governor in Council of Fort St. George; papers, ut supra, i. 153.

of a treaty, an hereditary sovereign incurs the forfeiture of his sovereignty, how would the case stand, not to speak of other sovereigns, with the East India Company itself? At a previous epoch, the Directors themselves had vehemently declared, that the treaty was violated; namely, by the assignments which the Nabob had granted on the districts set apart for securing the subsidy. All the rights, therefore, which a violation of the treaty could forfeit, were of course forfeited, on that occasion. Yet the Directors by no means pretended that they had a right to dethrone the Nabob on that occasion.[1]

In the letter of Ali Hussain to the agents of the family in England, "Being informed," he says, "on the 29th, that public notification had been made through the different streets of Madras, that the Ameer's son would be placed on the musnud on the 31st instant, under the influence of government, I immediately addressed the Governor with the advice of the regents, on the suggested measure, and proposed to accept the terms which had been at first offered; a measure which my mind revolted at, but which seemed to be demanded by the trying exigencies of the moment: and I felt confidence within myself, that, if my offer had been accepted, the liberality of the British nation would have never held me bound by conditions which had been so compulsorily imposed on me; or would have ameliorated a situation, that had been produced by means, which neither honour nor justice could bear to contemplate. My address was wholly and totally disregarded."[2]

[1] Vide supra.

[2] Papers, ut supra, ordered to be printed 21st and 23rd of June, 1802.

Of this offer no mention whatsoever appears in the correspondence of the Company's servants with their employers.

On the 6th of April, 1802, the deposed Nawab died. He was residing in the apartments of the Sultana Nissa Begum, his paternal aunt, when the malady, supposed a dysentery, began; and, in display of the resentments of the family, his situation was concealed from the English government, and the medical assistance of the English refused, till the case was desperate. Nearly at the same time, died Ameer Sing, the deposed Raja of Tanjore.[1]

Pondicherry having been restored to the French agreeably to the treaty of Amiens, Bonaparte alarmed the English by sending out a great list of military officers; seven generals, and a proportional number in the inferior ranks, with 1400 regular troops, and 100,000*l.* in specie. The speedy renewal of the war gave them relief from their fears. Possession of Pondicherry was resumed by the English in 1803; but the French Admiral, Linois, had intelligence sufficiently prompt, to enable him to escape with the fleet.[2]

[1] Papers, ut supra, i. 95, 96, 145, 146.
[2] Papers ordered to be printed in 1806, No. 25, p. 192.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 10.

1801.

Several occurrences of interest took place in this and the immediately subsequent period of the administration of the Marquess Wellesley, which as they are not adverted to in the pages of the original, it will be convenient to notice in this place.

During the year 1800, the Isle of France had been the resort of a number of armed vessels, which with singular activity and boldness carried on a predatory warfare against British commerce in the Indian ocean. The protection afforded by the presence of his Majesty's ships of war was of comparatively little avail against the sudden and rapid operations of the French privateers, and grievous injury was inflicted upon the country trade, and even upon that between England and India.[1] It was computed that between the commencement of the war and the end of 1800 the naval force of the French islands had carried into Port Louis, British property to the amount of above two millions sterling. That such a source of annoyance and injury, such a rallying point for any armament which might be equipped from France against the British possessions in India should be suffered to exist, was as discreditable to the national reputation, as it was destructive to the mercantile interests of British subjects, and incom-

[1] The Kent Indiaman was captured by a French privateer off the Sand Heads, on the 7th of October, after an action of an hour and three-quarters. She was carried by boarding, and the passengers and crew were treated after the capture with brutal barbarity. Dispatches, ii. 395,

patible with the safety of the Indian territories of Great Britain. It was not to be expected, therefore, that a Governor-General of the energetic character of Lord Mornington would fail to attempt the extinction of the evil by the subjugation of the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon.

Accordingly, in the latter months of 1800, as soon as the affairs of Mysore were settled, three of his Majesty's regiments, with 1000 Bengal volunteers, and details of native and European artillery, were ordered to assemble at Trincomalee on the Island of Ceylon, under the command of Colonel Wellesley, to be employed towards the close of December in an expedition against the Isle of France, if the accounts from Europe and from Egypt were of a nature to leave the Governor-General at liberty to make the attempt.[1] At the same time the plan of the expedition was communicated to Admiral Rainier, who commanded the British squadron in the Indian ocean, and he was earnestly requested to proceed to Trincomalee to meet the force and transports assembled there, and co-operate in the attack upon the Isle of France, the successful result of which admitted of no reasonable doubt, from the feeble means of resistance which the colony possessed.[2]

The attempt upon the Isle of France was retarded, however, by the extraordinary scruples of the British Admiral, who withheld his concurrence in the proposed expedition, chiefly because, in

[1] Letter to the Hon. Col. Wellesley, 5th Nov. 1800. Dispatches, ii. 413. See also Wellington Dispatches, i. 24, 31.

[2] Letter to Admiral Rainier, 22nd Oct. 1800. Dispatches, ii. 399. See also Letter to Sir G. Younge and Sir Roger Curtis. Ibid.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1801.

his opinion, no such enterprise could with propriety be undertaken, unless by the express command of the king, signified in the usual official form to the British government of India, and to the commanders of his Majesty's sea and land forces. It is difficult to believe how such a plea could have satisfied the understanding of a British officer, or that a mere defect of form should have imposed upon the Admiral the duty of frustrating or impairing the use of such means as the government of India might possess, for the seasonable annoyance of the enemy, instead of zealously seizing the opportunity to direct against them such additional and powerful resources. The principles urged by Lord Wellesley in reply to the Admiral's objections,[1] received the fullest confirmation from the home authorities; and Lord Hobart expressly states that it is of the utmost importance that it should be understood that in the distant possessions of the British empire during the existence of war, the want of the regular authority should not preclude an attack upon the enemy in any case that may appear calculated to promote the public interests.[2] Full credit is given to Admiral Rainier for having acted under a sense of public duty, but it is impossible to avoid suspecting that he was influenced, however unconsciously, by a jealous tenaciousness of authority which disdained receiving orders from an East India Company's Governor, a feeling which has on various occasions been manifested by those intrusted in India with

[1] Dispatches, Appendix, 753, 755.

[2] Letter from Lord Hobart to the Marquess Wellesley, 18th Sept. 1802. Dispatches, 700.

high naval commands, to the serious detriment of the public cause. On the present occasion its effects were most mischievous, for the privateers of the Isle of France continued, during several subsequent years after the renewal of the war, to harass and plunder with impunity the commercial navigation of the Eastern seas.

When the reluctance of Admiral Rainier was found insuperable, the Governor-General resolved to resume a design which had been suspended for a season, and send the troops collected at Ceylon against Batavia.[1] Before this project could be realized, instructions were received from England to undertake an expedition in a different direction, and to send a force from India to Egypt, to assist in the expulsion of the French from that country.[2] The instructions had been in some degree anticipated, and the destination of the troops assembled at Trincomalee was dependent upon the nature of the advices which should be received from England,[3] and which it was thought probable would direct the equipment of an armament for the Red Sea. The force assembled in Ceylon was therefore despatched to Bombay, to be joined there by 1600 native infantry which had been held in readines for foreign service.[4] The force was placed under the command of Major-General Baird, who left Bengal on the

[1] Wellington Dispatches, 155.

[2] Letter from the Right Hon. H. Dundas to the Marquess Wellesley, 6th Oct. 1803. Dispatches, ii. 436. The measure had been suggested by Lord Wellesley long before. Letter to the Right Hon. H. Dundas, 16th May. 1799. Dispatches, i. 587.

[3] From Marquess Wellesley to Major-General Baird, 10th Feb. 1801.

[4] Dispatches, ii. 440.

14th February; and after touching at Ceylon proceeded to Bombay, where he arrived on the 31st March.

The forces collected for the Egyptian expedition were embarked as fast as transports could be provided for them, and in successive detachments sailed to Mocha as the first point of rendezvous. They had been preceded in December by Rear-Admiral Blankett, with a squadron of the Company's cruisers, and a small body of troops intended to act as an advance-guard to the expedition, and prepare the way for its reception. Letters were also addressed by the Governor-General to all the principal Arab chiefs on the coast of the Red Sea, to conciliate their good offices, and secure their assistance.[1]

After touching at Mocha, General Baird proceeded to Jidda, where he arrived on the 18th of May, and was joined by Sir Home Popham, who had been sent out from England to take the command of the naval part of the expedition. There also he received intelligence of the action which had taken place between the French army and the British forces, on the 21st of March, the defeat of the former, and death of Sir Ralph Abercrombie. Proceeding to Koseir, General Baird arrived there on the 8th June, and having concentrated his troops, commenced his march towards the Nile. The passage of the desert, although impeded by a variety of vexatious embarrassments and delays, was effected without any serious loss, and the troops performed the rest of their route down the Nile in boats.

[1] Dispatches, ii. 471.

By the 27th of August the whole of General Baird's force, amounting to 7000 men, was assembled in the Isle of Rhouda. Thence they marched to Rosetta, with the hope of contributing to the capture of Alexandria, but were there met by intelligence that the French were in treaty for surrender, and with this event terminated hostilities in Egypt.

After the cessation of active operations, the two armies from India and England were united under the command of Lord Cavan, and the Sepoys were to be marched to Alexandria to form part of the garrison. The blending of two bodies, differing in many respects as to their pay and organization, was ill-calculated to give satisfaction to either, and the detention of the native troops to perform the duties of garrisons would have been a breach of the implied obligation, under which they had consented to engage in foreign service. These objectionable projects were, however, obviated by the intelligence that preliminaries of peace had been signed, and by the end of April orders were received for the return of the native troops, and a portion of the European to India. They were embarked at Suez in the beginning of June, 1802, and arrived at the Presidencies to which they severally belonged, in the course of the two following months.[1] This demonstration of the power of the British Empire, which thus brought together numerous and effective armaments from the West and from the East, to fight the battles of England, upon the banks of the Nile, was calculated to enhance her renown, and confirm

[1] Besides the Dispatches of Lord Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington, see the Life of Sir David Baird for these and other details.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1802.

her moral, as well as display her political strength. The demonstration was not needed: there was already, as the event proved, a sufficient force to overpower the reliques of the French army, and it would have been economy both of blood and treasure, to have adhered to the Governor-General's original design, and been contented with the less splendid but more serviceable conquest of the Isle of France.

Before the return of the troops from the Egyptian expedition, Lord Wellesley had tendered to the Court of Directors his resignation of the government of India. On the 1st of January, 1802, he conveyed to the Court his wish to be relieved before the end of the current year. In his despatch to the Court he assigned no other causes for that step than the successful accomplishment of the most essential branches of his general plan for the security of India; the prosperity of the existing state of affairs, and his expectation of completing in the course of the year as great a proportion of improvement in the affairs of India, as he could hope to accomplish within any period of time, to which his government could be reasonably protracted.[1] In a letter addressed to Mr. Addington, the Secretary of State,[2] his Lordship is more explicit: his continuance in India, he states, is precluded by powerful causes, and his administration is brought to a premature conclusion by the authority most interested in its extension; that is, by the Court of Directors, whom he charges with having manifested a want of confi-

[1] Letter to the Court of Directors, 1st Jan. 1802. Dispatches, ii. 616.

[2] Letter to the Right Hon. H. Addington, Cawnpore, 10th Jan. 1802. Dispatches, iii. Introduction, p. iv.

dence in him, with having interfered in details of local administration, usually left to local authority, and with having refused their sanction or expressed their disapprobation of arrangements which he had adopted, upon a conviction of their expedience or necessity. He then specifies the particular cases, included under these three general heads.

Without following the Governor-General through all the circumstances which he details, it will be easy to select such as will prove that his accusations were not unfounded and that the Court of Directors had adopted towards him, opinions and feelings with the influence of which his continuance in his situation was wholly incompatible. They had learned to look upon him with distrust and fear, on various grounds, some of which were not wholly untenable, but of which others were inconsistent with the extension of the British power in India, and the more decidedly political nature of the position in which the Company had been placed by the results of the war with Tippoo Sultan. Unquestionably the accession of territory acquired by that war; the more complex relations in which it had involved the British government with the neighbouring states; and the continuance of hostilities in Europe, fully justified Lord Wellesley in making an addition to the strength of the Company's army. The Court of Directors, influenced by considerations of economy, which, to say the least of it, was ill-timed, disapproved of the augmentation, and peremptorily ordered a reduction to be made. To have obeyed those orders, would not only have incapacitated the government from co-operating in the Egyptian

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. 1802.

campaign, but would have exposed the newly-acquired provinces, to be the prey of rebellion or invasion. Lord Wellesley was therefore compelled to suspend obedience to the orders of the Court, and they never were obeyed. The Mahratta war, which presently followed, was an unanswerable argument against any diminution of the military strength of British government.

Some of the proceedings of the Court regarded the abolition of various salaries and allowances which the Governor-General had sanctioned or granted: this gave him deep offence, and he resents it in strong terms. "It cannot be denied," he observes, "that the Court, by reducing the established allowances of Colonel Wellesley, has offered me the most direct, marked, and disgusting personal indignity which could be devised. The effect of this order must be to inculcate an opinion that I have suffered my brother to derive emoluments beyond the limits of justice and propriety, and that I have exhibited an example of profusion and extravagance in an allowance granted to my nearest connexion. I have already stated that the ground of the order is as unjust and unwarranted in point of fact, as its operation is calculated to be injurious and humiliating to my reputation and honour." It would appear that the Court had not sufficiently considered the nature of Colonel Wellesley's political as well as military functions in Mysore, or the unavoidable expenses of his situation; and it is undeniable, as Lord Wellesley urges, that if the Court conceived Colonel Wellesley and the Governor-General capable of the conduct which their orders insinuated, they should not have stopped short with

such imputation, but should have removed Colonel Wellesley from his command, and Lord Wellesley from his government.

Besides objections to the amount of remuneration for public services, the Court of Directors assumed a right to nominate individuals to offices of trust, and to displace those appointed by their Governors in India. Thus a peremptory order directed Lord Wellesley to appoint a particular person to be Acting President of the Board of Trade, to the supersession of another individual, who had been placed in that office by the government; and at Madras the Court, in opposition to the opinions and wishes of Lord Clive, removed the chief secretary to the government and appointed another, displaced a member of the Board of Revenue, and directly nominated two members to that Board, and granted one of the most important commercial residences on the Coast in reversion upon the first vacancy. These measures undoubtedly constituted an usurpation of patronage contrary to the letter and spirit of the Act of Parliament of 1793, which, in vesting the privilege of nomination to all offices under Members of Council in the local authorities, subject to the control of the Court of Directors and the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India, did not intend to give to either of the latter more than the power of checking any abuse of local patronage, and protecting the just rights of their servants in India: where these were flagrantly and systematically invaded, it was, no doubt, the duty of the authorities in England to interfere, but it is obvious that if the interference is perpetually called for, the legitimate remedy is not

BOOK VI CHAP. 10. an assumption of the patronage, but the removal of the offender.

1802. In addition to the counteraction and mortification thus complained of, the Governor-General, at the time he wrote, anticipated exposure to still further offence; "I am menaced," he observes, "with angry orders of various descriptions, for the subversion of many of the most important acts and institutions of my administration, and for the entire change of its general tenor and spirit." Although not mentioned, he especially alludes to two sets of measures in which he took an active interest, and in which he was most pointedly at variance with the Court of Directors—the establishment of the College of Fort William, and the extended facilities afforded to private trade in Bengal.

It has been already noticed, that in compliance with the requisition of the trading interests of England, a provision was introduced into the charter of 1793, by which 3000 tons at least were to be annually allotted to private merchants. Two objects were proposed by this condition, which was considered to be consistent with the general principle of the Company's monopoly. These were, First, the augmented export of British manufactures; Secondly, the remittance direct to England of that portion of British capital which the Company's investment could not take up, and which was therefore sent in articles of Indian export by foreign shipping, whenever British tonnage was deficient. The provision had failed in both respects. The high rate of freight charged on the Company's shipping, and the delays and interruptions to which their vessels were

subjected, were justly complained of as deterring merchants and manufacturers from engaging extensively in the trade. In fact, however, there was no great demand in India at that time for British goods; and the amount of export tonnage, even if the expense had been reduced, would probably have been more than equal to the demand. The case was different with Indian goods. There was a large capital in India, in the fortunes of individuals, that wanted employment, and there was a very extensive demand in Europe for a variety of articles besides those which the Company reserved as objects of their exclusive trade;[1] consequently, the tonnage offered to private merchants by the Company, was wholly insufficient for their wants, besides being ruinously costly and uncertain. So strongly was this felt, that the Court of Directors, in May, 1798, authorized the government of Bengal to take up ships, on the account of the Company, for the purpose of re-letting, on the same account, the tonnage to the merchants of Calcutta. Their plan, however, was objectionable on the same grounds as before, expense and delay; and, the principle having been admitted, the practice was modified by Lord Wellesley so far that the merchants and ship-owners were permitted to make their own arrangements for the extent and rate of the freight, and the despatch of the vessels, sub-

[1] The amount of private, exclusive of privilege goods, shipped from Bengal in the period between the passing of the Act of Parliament and 1800 is thus stated:—

	Tons.		Tons.		Tons.
1794—5	2473	1796—7	4659	1798—9	6223
1795—6	5346	1797—8	3787	1799—00	7748

At the latter period above 10,000 tons of shipping, built in India, were tendered for the voyage to England.

BOOK VI. CHAP. 10.

1802.

ject to such conditions as were thought necessary to protect the Company's privilege.[1] The discretion thus exercised created exceeding alarm and anger at home. As the ships taken up were India built, the ship-builders of the Port of London anticipated the destruction of their business, and the Court of Directors proclaimed that the Company's monopoly was subverted. The views of the Governor-General were advocated by a strong mercantile interest in England, and were upheld by the President of the Board of Control, so that the disapprobation of the Court was not allowed to be directly and immediately expressed.[2] The Governor-General repeated the same arrangement in 1800, and in his report of the circumstance to the Court, declared it to be his decided and conscientious conviction that the permanent establishment of a systematic intercourse between the ports of India and that of London, regulated by principles similar to those adopted by his government, had become indispensable to the united and inseparable interests of the Company and of the nation in India. The liberal and unanswerable arguments by which this opinion was vindicated, were not calculated to render the measure acceptable to the narrow and selfish jealousy of the ship-owners or of the Court of Directors. That the Governor-General's unpopularity with both at this early period of his administra-

[1] Advertisement of the Board of Trade, Calcutta, 5th Oct. 1798. Dispatches ii. Append. 736.

[2] Letter from the Right Hon. H. Dundas to the Committee of Ship Builders, 1st July, 1797, and to the Chairman of the Hon. E. India Company, 2nd April, 1800. Wellesley Dispatches, v. 117, 121. Letter from the same to Lord Mornington, 18th March, 1799. Ibid. ii. 101. Letter to the Court, 30th Sept. 1800. Dispatches, ii. 376.

tion must be mainly referred to the encouragement which he thus afforded to the private trade of India cannot be doubted, and was his own impression. "I apprehend," he observes, "that my conduct on the question of the private trade has been the main source of the virulence which has been betrayed by the Court on various other topics."[1]

The support given by Lord Wellesley to the trade from India to England in British-built ships, was the result of the calm and deliberate consideration of a measure concerning which he himself declares he felt no particular solicitude. The same indifference did not attach to an institution of which he was the creator and fosterer—the College of Fort William, and in respect to which he was fated to encounter the no less strenuous opposition of the Court of Directors.

The alteration which had taken place in the situation of the Company in India, and their assumption of a political to the comparative extinction of a mercantile character, had permanently changed the objects which their civil servants were appointed to accomplish, and the denominations of writer, factor, and merchant, by which they were still distinguished, were utterly inapplicable to the nature and extent of

[1] See Letter of Mr. Grant and Mr. Twining, two of the Directors, to Lord Wellesley. Dispatches, v. 142, 143; also Marquess Wellesley to Lord Castlereagh, 12th Feb. 1803. Dispatches, iii. 54. Papers on the Private Trade. Asiatic Annual Register, 1801; also Debates at the India House on the same subject. In a debate on the 28th May, 1801, one of the Directors, who had recently been chairman, asserted, that "it was through the impropriety of Lord Wellesley's conduct that the agents and merchants were admitted into what they wanted and what they enjoyed." Ibid. p. 176. See also Henchman's Observations on the Reports of the Court of Directors, 1801, and Auber's Rise and Progress of the British Power in India, ii. 232.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1802.

their duties and occupations. Not only had they for the greater part ceased to have any connexion with trade, but they were bound by oath to abstain from every commercial and mercantile pursuit, and it had now become their task to maintain civil order through an extensive and populous country; to dispense justice to millions of people of various languages, manners, and creeds; to administer a complicated system of revenue and finance; to conduct difficult and intricate negotiations with all the powers of India; and in several of the chief native states to exercise, as Residents, a peculiar and invidious control over vast principalities. They were required, in short, to discharge the duties of statesmen in every other part of the world, but under difficulties of a characteristic description, arising from the total dissimilarity that existed between the languages, manners, and opinions of England and India—between all the circumstances in which the public functionaries had been educated, and those to which the fruits of their education were to be applied. It may seem extraordinary that the incongruity of the two had not previously been discovered, and that it was reserved for the Marquess Wellesley to discover that a knowledge of the languages spoken by the people of India, and of the people themselves, was an essential part of the education of those Englishmen who were to be charged with the offices of magistrates, judges, collectors, ambassadors, and governors in India.

The views entertained by the Marquess Wellesley of the sort of instruction required, although sound in principle, were of an extent which it would be difficult under any circumstances to realize, and which

in India it was hopeless to attempt. The state of preparation in which the junior civil servants of his day were sent out, justified him, no doubt, in desiring that even their European education should be continued after their arrival. Some of the writers he describes as unfit to execute any duties beyond those of a copying-clerk, whilst of those who had received the benefits of a superior education, the studies had been prematurely interrupted at the age when they were about to yield the reward of application. An adequate remedy for this was not to be found in India, but in England; and the attempt to prolong a course of European study in Bengal, where few of the inducements or facilities for such an object were available, and where the services of competent instructors could not at all times or for a continuance be procured, was justly condemned by the Court of Directors as an unprofitable expenditure both of money and of time.

Whilst, however, it was obviously a matter of easy regulation to enforce, in the case of every junior civil servant, the acquirement at home, of the highest possible attainments that could be gained by English education, it was equally evident that certain local qualifications were indispensable, which could not at any time be conveniently, or at that time be at all obtained in Europe. It was scarcely possible to add to the most approved course of juvenile instruction in England, an intimate acquaintance with the history, customs, and manners of the people of India, with the Mohammedan and Hindu codes of law and religion, with the commercial and political interests and relations of Great Britain in Asia, or with the code of

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1802.

regulations and laws enacted by the Governor-General in council, for the purpose of securing to the people of India the benefit of the ancient and accustomed laws of the country, administered in the spirit of the British constitution. Knowledge of this description could be acquired only in India, and an adequate provision for its being effectively imparted was well worthy of the care and encouragement of the state. There are, however, in the constitution of the civil service, and in the condition of society in India, serious obstacles to this part of the plan; and the only realizable results of the projected establishment were the means of acquiring a command of the languages of the country, of receiving through their literature an honest and authentic expression of the feelings and sentiments of the people, and of learning something of their history, institutions, and laws. The plan of the College also afforded occasions of intimate and creditable intercourse with natives of learning and talent, by which many ignorant prejudices were removed from both the native and European mind, and mutually favourable impressions were acquired. It also offered encouragement to native learning and talent, and the plan extended throughout Hindustan the reputation of the Company's government. Although, therefore, its operations were not as comprehensive as its founder designed, the college of Fort William was productive of important public advantages, exercised for several subsequent years a beneficial influence upon the character of the junior servants of the Company, and was instrumental to the service and credit of the state. A spirit of retrenchment

and private interests at last combined to effect its extinction, leaving in its room a meagre contrivance for teaching the smallest possible quantity of the languages of Bengal, necessary for imperfectly understanding the mere speech of the people.[1]

The arguments urged by Lord Wellesley with considerable ability, and in general with unanswerable truth, as to the necessity of an improved scale of education for their servants, and the expedience of a collegiate establishment in India for their use, failed to satisfy the Court of Directors, who alarmed at what they termed the considerable and unknown amount of the expense by which it was to be attended, and entertaining an exaggerated apprehension of the financial embarrassments of the Indian government, ordered its immediate abolition. At the same time they could not deny the necessity of providing for instruction in some of the native languages, and they furnished a sketch of a more economical establishment which they were prepared to sanction. Although, in obedience to the orders of the court, the Governor-General announced it to be the intention of the government to abolish the college, he postponed, for various reasons, the actual abolition, until the close of 1803, expressing his hope, that in the mean time, the representations addressed by him to the court might prevail upon it to suffer the establishment to remain unaltered, until he should be enabled to report in person the condition and effects of the institution, and submit

[1] Notes by the Governor-General on the foundation of a College at Fort William, 10th July, 1800. Dispatches, ii. 325. Regulations for the Foundation, &c. Ibid. 356.

BOOK VI CHAP. 10.

1802.

such details as might enable the court to exercise its final judgment on the whole plan. This representation, backed by the decided support of the Board of Control, was not without effect upon the proceedings of the Directors, and the sanction of the court was eventually given to the continuance of a college for the instruction of Bengal writers in the Oriental languages in use in that part of India. Arrangements of a more restricted nature were adopted, for the like instruction to be given to the young civilians of Madras and Bombay, in the languages of the Peninsula, and a college was a few years afterwards founded in England, for the better education of the junior civilians of all the Presidencies, in the usual objects of European study, as well as for a preparatory instruction in the languages of the East. However mutilated, therefore, by the economy or jealousy of the Court of Directors, the projected college of Lord Wellesley had the merit of awakening public attention to an object of vital importance to the prosperity of British India, and of originating useful, although still imperfect measures for its attainment.[1]

The announcement of Lord Wellesley's wish to be relieved from the labours of his government, proved acceptable to neither the ministry nor to the Court of Directors, and both addressed him to urge his remaining in India for a further period,[2] at least until

[1] Lord Castlereagh to the Marquess Wellesley, 28th April, 1803. Dispatches, iii. 379.

[2] From Lord Castlereagh, President of the Board of Control, 10th August and 10th Sept. 1802. Dispatches, iii. 31, 33. From the Court of Directors to the Governor-General, 29th Sept. 1802. Dispatch, iii. Introduction, xxv.

the month of January, 1804. In writing to his Lordship on this occasion, the Court of Directors expressed their persuasion, that in another season the Governor-General would be able to terminate with honour to himself, and advantage to the Company, every measure of importance connected with the recent acquisitions, perfect the retrenchments, as well those resulting from the peace, as others of which their affairs might be susceptible, and in concert with the home authorities lay the foundation of an efficient system, for the liquidation of the Indian debt. These expectations were disappointed. The war with France was speedily renewed, and the war with the Mahrattas called upon the Indian governments for renewed exertions and augmented expense.

CHAPTER XI.

Two sets of Princes, connected with the English; one, whom they made resign both the military and the civil powers of their government; another, whom they made resign only the military powers.—Endeavour to make the Peshwa resign the military part of his government.—Negotiations for that purpose from 1798 to 1802.—Negotiations with Dowlut Rao Sindia for a similar purpose.—The dependence of all the Mahratta states expected as the effect of the resignation to the English of the military power of any one of them.—Negotiation with Sindia ineffectual.—War between Sindia and Holkar.—The Peshwa driven from Poona.—For the sake of being restored by English arms, the Peshwa consents to the resignation of his military power.— A treaty for that purpose signed at Bassein.—The Governor-General expects, that the other Mahratta states will not dare to quarrel with the English on account of the treaty of Bassein.—Sindia assembles his troops, and marches to the vicinity of Boorhanpore.—Persevering attempts to make Sindia execute a treaty similar to that of Bassein.—The Peshwa restored.—Probability of a war with the Mahratta Princes on account of the treaty of Bassein.—

Junction of the armies of Sindia and the Raja of Berar.—Sindia and the Raja required by the English to quit their present menacing position, and replace their armies at their usual stations.—Sindia and the Raja evading compliance, the English regard them as enemies.—Arguments by which the Governor-General endeavoured to prove that the line of policy which led to this crisis was good.—Investigation of those arguments.

1802.

The relations, which the British government endeavoured to establish with the Princes of India, were different in different circumstances. They with whom their connexion was the most intimate, the Nabob of the Carnatic, the Raja of Tanjore, the Nabob of Oude, formed one class. Another was formed by those who stood in the circumstances of the Nizam, of the Peshwa, and other Mahratta powers.

From the Princes of the first class, it had lately been the object of the British government to take away not only the military, but likewise the civil power, in the countries to which their titles respectively extended; and, leaving them the name of sovereign, to make them simply pensioners of state. With the rest, this object had been completely attained: with the Nabob of Oude, it was found expedient to make something of a compromise. A sort of delegated administration, which, however, he bound himself to carry on according to the pleasure of the delegator, was left to him in civil affairs, in a portion, not much more than a third, of his former dominions.

To this point the pretensions of the British govern-

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1802.

ment had advanced by degrees. At first they were neither very high, nor very definite. The English, for their own security, found it necessary to aid the Princes in defending themselves; and the Princes agreed to re-imburse the English for the expenses which they incurred.

The powers of government, that is, in India, the powers of the sovereign, may be looked upon as divided (in India they are very conspicuously divided) into two portions; the one, the military power; the other, the civil power; the one consisting in authority over the military force; the other in the administration of what is called the civil or non-military affairs of the state, the collection of the revenue, judicature, and police.

The English arrived at the first remarkable stage, when they made the Princes, with whom they were most nearly connected, strip themselves of their military power, to place it in the hands of the English. At this stage affairs remained during a considerable number of years. The sovereigns, placed in these circumstances, held their civil power in a state of absolute dependence. When the civil power, also, was taken away from them, nothing of sovereign remained, but the name. They were in the situation of the Raja of Sattarah, only in the hands of a people, to whom it was agreeable to treat them with more indulgence.

With the Princes of the second class, the object at which the British government had begun to aim, was, to make each of them resign the military part of his power to the English. In respect to the Nizam, the business had been effectually accom-

plished by the treaty of 1800; when he agreed to receive the subsidiary force of the English, and alienated a great proportion of his dominions to defray its expense.[1] The eagerness with which Lord Wellesley endeavoured to establish the same relations with the principal Mahratta states, he himself informs us, was extreme.

It had suited the English, in their transactions with the Mahratta people, to suppose, in the chieftain called the Peshwa, a species of sovereign authority over the rest of the Mahratta potentates; an authority, which it was abundantly evident that he did not exercise, and to which it was equally evident that the rest of the Princes paid no respect.[2] In the spirit of this policy, it was the wish of Lord Wellesley to induce the Peshwa, in preference to all the rest of the Mahratta chiefs, to consign the defence of his government and dominions to a British force, and to alienate a part of those dominions for the maintenance of that force; an arrangement which that Governor denominates, "an intimate alliance,

[1] Dispatches, ii. 135, 258, 270, 275, and Appendix, 709, 726.

[2] The whole history of the Mahratta states shows that the Peshwa's supremacy was not merely what it suited the English to represent it, but was an essential part of the constitution of the state. The overgrown power of some of the chiefs had, it is true, rendered the Peshwa's authority little more than nominal as regarded them; but even Sindia and Holkar ever professed to consider the Peshwa as their sovereign, or at least, as their sovereign's representative. The title by which they held their lands, was, originally, a grant from the Peshwa in consideration of military service. Undoubtedly, as far as this kind of contract was a leading feature in the feudal system of Europe, the same system may be said to have been found in India. Territory held by the tenure of military service occurred throughout India, and was the loose bond which held the Mahratta chiefs together under a common head. With exception, too, of some of the most powerful of the chiefs, the Peshwa's authority was exercised over the Mahratta jagirdars or feudatories.—W.

BOOK VI. CHAP. II. 1802.

founded upon principles which should render the British influence and military force the main support of that power."[1]

In 1798, when the Nizam consented to transfer the military powers of government within his dominions to the English, a similar proposal of "general defensive alliance, and mutual guarantee,"[2] as it is called by Lord Wellesley, was strongly pressed upon the Peshwa. The moment was conceived to be favourable. "The authority of Bajee Rao," says the Governor-General, "was then reduced to a state of extreme weakness by the imbecility of his councils, by the instability and treachery of his disposition, and by the prevalence of internal discord; and in that crisis, his government was menaced with destruction, by the overbearing power of Sindia. It was evident that the Peshwa could not expect to be relieved from the oppressive control of Sindia, and to be restored to a due degree of authority within his own dominions, by any other means than by the aid of the British power."[3] The Governor-General informs us, that Bajee Rao did even apply to him for assistance. But when he was made to under-

[1] Governor-General's Narrative of the late Transactions in the Mahratta empire: East India Papers, Mahratta War, 1803, ordered to be printed 5th and 22nd of June, 1804, p. 304.—M. Besides the Narrative, the same collection contains another communication from Lord Wellesley, entitled Notes relative to the late Transactions in the Mahratta Empire. This was separately printed, with an appendix of official documents, by Debrett, 1804. See also Dispatches, iii. 26.—W.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Governor-General's instructions to the Resident at Poonah, dated 23rd of June, 1802, transmitted in Letter from the Governor-General to the Secret Committee, dated 24th of December, 1802, and received the 9th of May, 1803. Ibid. p. 34.—M. Dispatches, iii. 3, 12.—W.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 11.

1802.

stand, that it would be granted only on the condition of permanently confiding his defence to a British force; that is, of transferring his military power to the hands of the English, "he deliberately," says the Governor-General, "preferred a situation of degradation and danger, with nominal independence, to a more intimate connexion with the British power; which," adds the Governor-General, sufficiently disclosing his views, "could not be formed on principles calculated to secure to the Peshwa the constant protection of our arms, without, at the same time, establishing our ascendency in the Mahratta empire."[1] The length of time, during which the Peshwa amused the Governor-General, is thus commented upon by that disappointed ruler: Subsequent events justify a conclusion, that the long and systematic course of deceitful policy, pursued by the Peshwa on this occasion, was not less the result of a determined spirit of hostility, than of his characteristic jealousy and irresolution."[2]

The prospect of the war between the British power and Tippoo Sultaun inspired not the Peshwa, we are assured by the Governor-General, with any of the sentiments of a generous ally; but turned his attention solely to the advantages which the crisis presented "to the faithless and sordid policy of that Prince;" who not only, "by a course of studied and systematic deceit, avoided all active interference in the contest, but actually maintained an amicable intercourse with the enemy."[3]

The Governor-General even makes profession of

[1] Dispatches, iii 3, 12. [2] Ibid.

[3] Letters, ut supra, p. 31.

BOOK VI. CHAP. 11.

1802.

having been duped by the Peshwa. "His Excellency," says he, speaking of himself in the third person, a novelty which this Governor-General introduced, and of which, in the end, the Directors complained, "in a letter addressed to the Honourable the Court of Directors, under date the 20th of March, 1799, expressed his conviction, that the disposition of the Court of Poonah continued perfectly favourable to the British interests; and that want of power would be the sole cause of its inaction, in the event of a war with Tippoo Sultaun." The course of the war, however, he says, suggested doubts; and at the termination of it they were confirmed, "by the correspondence between Tippoo Sultaun and his agents at Poonah, and by letters from Nana Furnavese, and other Mahratta chieftains, to Tippoo Sultaun, which were discovered among the records of Seringapatam. The combined evidence of those documents, and of the Peshwa's conduct during the war, affords unequivocal proofs of the hostility of his disposition towards the British power; and justifies a conclusion, that, if fortune had appeared to favour the enemy, the Peshwa would openly have espoused his cause."[1]

Here was the conduct most exactly, which had been ascribed to the Nabob of Arcot, and by which that prince was declared to have forfeited his throne. The Nabob of Arcot, and the Peshwa, were both princes, connected, by treaty, in alliance with the British power. Both were accused of violating the obligations of that treaty, by corresponding with

[1] Letters, ut supra, p. 34.

Tippoo Sultaun. We have seen the treatment bestowed upon the one; it remains to contrast with it, that which was bestowed upon the other, of the two offenders.[1]

"Although," says the Governor-General, "the faithless conduct of the Peshwa not only deprived him of all title to participate in the advantages of the war, but exposed him to the just resentment of the allies, the Governor-General determined to refrain from any measures of a vindictive nature: and to adopt the more liberal policy—of conciliating the Peshwa's interests—and of providing for the security of the allies, and for the general tranquillity of India—by repeating his invitation to the Peshwa to accede to the proposal of general defensive alliance and mutual guarantee; which his Excellency had before unsuccessfully offered to the Peshwa's acceptance."[2]

Such was the difference of treatment intended for the Peshwa. The following was the result. "At the close of the war in 1799," says the Governor-General, "the propositions for the conclusion of defensive and subsidiary engagements with the Peshwa were renewed; under circumstances of peculiar advantage to the latter; who, by acceding to those propositions, would not only have been emancipated from the oppressive control of Sindia, and have been reinstated in the due exercise of his authority—but

[1] It scarcely needs to be observed, that they were situated, in relation to the British power, in totally dissimilar circumstances: the mere existence of a treaty with each constituted no analogy: the identity or difference depended upon the conditions and objects of the treaties made with them.—W.

[2] Letter, ut supra, Ibid. p. 34.

BOOK VI. CHAP. II. would have been admitted to a participation in the conquered territory of Mysore.

1802. "But, after a vexatious and illusory discussion of the propositions, during a period of several months, the negotiation was closed, by the Peshwa's rejection of the conditions of defensive alliance, under any admissible modification of them.

"The circumstances of that negotiation afford the strongest reasons to believe, that the Peshwa never seriously intended to enter into any engagements, on the basis of those propositions; and that he had no other intention, from the commencement of the negotiation, than, to avoid the consequences of an unqualified refusal to treat; to deceive the public, and the Governor-General, by the appearances of a disposition to concur in the views of the British government for the tranquillity of India; and to deter Sindia from the prosecution of his ambitious designs, by persuading that chieftain, that the Peshwa had it in his power, and in his contemplation, to avail himself of the protection of the British arms."[1]

Nor were these the only occasions on which the Peshwa had been importuned on the same subject.

[1] Letter, ut supra, Ibid. p. 34.—M.

These were, no doubt, his intentions; as, beside his own very reasonable aversion to arrangements which would have placed the Peshwa under the control of the English, the same policy was always enforced upon him by the sagacity of Nana Furnavese, who, to the period of his death in 1800, was decidedly averse to the admission of a body of foreign troops in the manner proposed by the Marquess Wellesley, if the energies of the Government could be restored without their aid. Nana Furnavese respected the English, admired them sincerely, and the vigour of their Government, but as political enemies, no one regarded them with more jealousy and alarm. Mahr. Hist. iii. 188.—W.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 11.

1802.

"The negotiations," continues the same high reporter, "which followed the renewal of the Governor-General's propositions in the month of April, 1800, were conducted, on the part of the Peshwa, in the same spirit of temporizing policy, and studied evasion, which characterized his conduct in every previous discussion. His long and degrading subjection to the power of Sindia; his repeated experience of the perfidy and violence of that unprincipled chieftain; the internal distraction which prevailed in his government; and the consciousness of his inability to relieve himself from the pressure of his accumulated difficulties, and to secure the efficient exercise of his authority; were insufficient to subdue the emotions of his jealous fears, and to induce him to rely, with confidence, on the protection of that state, which alone possessed the power and the will to extricate him from his embarrasments, and to place him in a situation of comparative dignity and security. Those negotiations were closed in the month of September, 1800, when various unprecedented acts of violence and extortion, on the part of Sindia, had aggravated the pressure of the Peshwa, and virtually annihilated his authority—by the Peshwa's absolute rejection of the principal articles of the Governor-General's proposition.

"And he may be considered to have rejected those propositions again, by his refusal to become a party in the treaty of general defensive alliance, concluded with the Nizam in October, 1800, which was tendered to his acceptance."[1]

[1] Letter, ut supra, Ibid. 35.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 11.

1802.

But the complaints of the Governor-General are not confined to the arts by which the Peshwa endeavoured to preserve the advantage of appearing to enjoy the friendship of the British government, and at the same time to avoid the transference and loss of his military power. "While these several negotiations were depending," says the great informant, "the Peshwa was at different times employed in carrying on intrigues at the court of Hyderabad, to effect the dissolution of the alliance between the Company and the Nizam, and to engage his Highness to unite with the Mahrattas, at any future favourable opportunity, for the subversion of the British power." [1]

Towards the end of the year 1801, the Peshwa came forward with a proposal "for subsidizing a body of British troops." To this, according to the Governor-General, he was "influenced, either by views and intentions similar to those which regulated his conduct during the negotiations of 1799 and 1800: or, if sincere in his proposal, by the hope of obtaining the aid of the British for the re-establishment and security of his authority, without hazarding the introduction of that degree of control and ascendency, which," says the Governor-General, "it must be our interest to establish in the Mahratta state, and which it is his object to avoid." [2]

"The Peshwa," continues the Governor-General, "is aware, that the permanent establishment of a British force, in the vicinity of Poonah, would immediately place him, in some degree, in a state of

[1] Letter, ut supra, Ibid. p. 35.

[2] Ibid.

dependence upon the British power. And, therefore, he has stipulated, that the subsidiary force shall be retained within the Company's dominions at all times, except when he shall require its actual services."[1] For the charges of the troops, the Peshwa proposed to assign a territory, in a part of the Mahratta country over which he had only a nominal authority, and "the cession of which," says the Governor-General, "would not in any degree contribute to render the Peshwa dependent on the support of the British power."[2] Because this arrangement would be extremely advantageous to the Peshwa, without yielding correspondent advantages to the British government, it was the opinion of the Governor-General, that it ought to be rejected. But he was of opinion, that rather than not get a British force subsidized, as he termed it, by the Peshwa; that is, placed in the service, and at the expense of that prince, it was advisable to consent to his proposition with regard to the station of the troops, provided he would make an acceptable provision in land, or even in money, for their maintenance. The Governor-General reasoned thus: "The measure of subsidizing a British force, even under the limitations which the Peshwa has annexed to that proposal, must immediately place him, in some degree, in a state of dependence upon the British power; provided that measure be uncombined with any other arrangement, calculated to defeat its operation. The dependence of a state, in any degree, upon the power of another, naturally

[1] Letter, ut supra, Ibid. p. 35. [2] Ibid.

1802.

tends to promote a sense of security, derived from the support of a foreign power; produces a relaxation of vigilance and caution; and the operation of natural causes, in augmenting the dependence of the Peshwa on the British power, under the operation of the proposed engagement, would be accelerated by the effect which those engagements would produce, of detaching the state of Poonah from the other members of the Mahratta empire."[1]

When "the Governor-General," these are his own words, "notwithstanding his frequent disappointments in the accomplishment of his salutary views, determined, in June, 1802, to renew his negotiations for the conclusion of an improved system of alliance with the court of Poonah; the increased distraction in the Mahratta state, the rebellion of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and his success against the combined forces of the Peshwa and Sindia, appeared to constitute a crisis of affairs, favourable to the success of the proposed negotiation at Poonah. In the course of the discussions which ensued, the Peshwa manifested a desire to contract defensive engagements with the Honourable Company, under circumstances of more apparent solicitude, than had marked his conduct at any former occasion. The Peshwa, however, continued to withhold his consent to any admissible modifications of the Governor-General's propositions, until Jeswunt Rao Holkar, at the head of a formidable army, actually arrived in the vicinity of Poonah."[2]

The crisis to which the Mahratta affairs were

[1] Letter, ut supra, Ibid. p. 37.

[2] Governor-General's Narrative, Ibid. p. 305.

1802.

then approaching, was preceded and produced by the following circumstances.

Mulhar Rao Holkar, one of the leaders in the army of the first Peshwa, was instrumental in pushing the conquests of the Mahrattas towards the north; and, according to the usual policy of the Mahratta government, received a portion of territory, in the province of Malwa, for the support of his troops. This happened about the year 1736; and laid the foundation of the sovereignty of the Holkar family; for, as the power of the primary government declined, that of the principal viceroys, according to custom, became independent; and, although the memory of their primitive connexion with the Peshwa was not yet obliterated, they not only acted as his equals, but frequently as his masters; and on no occasion, except when it suited their interest, allowed their will to be governed by his. Mulhar Rao Holkar died in the year 1766. He was succeeded by his nephew Tukajee Holkar. This Prince reigned till the year 1797. He left four sons, Cashee Rao, Mulhar Rao, Etojee Holkar, and Jeswunt Rao Holkar; the two former alone by the wife or principal female in his harem. Cashee Rao succeeded Tukajee, as the eldest son by his wife. A dispute, however, soon arose between Cashee Rao and his brother Mulhar Rao, who claimed an equal share in the inheritance; and they both repaired to Poonah, for the purpose of settling their disputes by the intervention of the Peshwa.[1]

[1] Mulhar Rao, named Holkar, or, more properly, Hulkur, from the village of Hul, where he was born, was of the Dhoongur or Shepherd caste.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 11.

1802.

Dowlut Rao Sindia exercised at that time a despotic authority over the Peshwa; and regarded the occasion as highly favourable for adding the possessions of the Holkar family to his own. Having made his terms with Cashee Rao, who is said to have renounced a claim of sixty, and paid a sum of six lacs of rupees,[1] he surprised and slaughtered Mulhar Rao with all his attendants, at Poonah, in the month of September, 1797. The wife of Mulhar Rao, left in a state of pregnancy, produced a son, who was named Khundeh Rao. Sindia possessed himself of the person of the infant; retained Cashee Rao in a state of dependence; and proposed to govern the Holkar dominions in his name. The

His father was a small farmer, and he himself, whilst a youth, tended the flocks of the family; he was afterwards enlisted in his troop by an uncle who commanded a small party of horse in the service of a Mahratta chief. Distinguishing himself as a brave and active soldier, he was taken into the service of the Peshwa, the first Bajee Rao, was appointed to the command of five hundred horse, and, in the course of a short time, acquired higher distinctions. The first grant of land for his services was made in 1728. In 1732 he commanded the advance of the Mahratta army which conquered Malwa; and, in the following year, Indore, which became the capital of his descendants, was assigned to him for the support of his troops. To the territory round Indore he made large accessions, so that, with exception of one district, all that belonged to his successors was bequeathed by Mulhar Rao. The only son, Kundee Rao, being dead, he was succeeded by his grandson, Mallee Rao, but this prince reigned only nine months. Upon his decease a distribution of the powers of the state of Indore took place, which, however apparently precarious, continued undisturbed for thirty years. Alia (Ahalya) Bhye, the mother of Mallee Rao, widow of Kundee Rao, the son of Mulhar Rao, boldly assumed the office of regent, and elected for the commander of the army, and to fulfil those duties which she could not as a female perform, Tukajee Holkar, a chief of the same tribe, but no way related to Mulhar Rao. Ahalya Bhye died in 1795; Tukajee in 1797. Malcolm's Central India, i. 1, 142. The character of Ahalaya Bhye is there delineated at length in the most favourable colours. She was undoubtedly a woman of singular merit.—W.

[1] Fifteen, according to Malcolm; ten in cash, and five in the mortgage of the revenue of Amber in the Deccan. Central India, i. 197.—W.

two brothers Etojee and Jeswunt Rao had attached themselves to the cause of Mulhar Rao, and were both at Poonah at the time of his murder. Etojee fled to Kolapore, where he was taken, in the commission of hostilities; sent to Poonah; and deprived of his life.[1] Jeswunt Rao, made his escape to Nagpore; and was protected for some time; but the instigations of Sindia at last prevailed, and the Raja placed him in confinement. He contrived to effect his escape, and fled to Muheswer, on the Nerbuddah.[2] Sindia, at that time deeply engaged in his schemes for securing the ascendency at Poonah, had not leisure to pursue the fugitives with vigour and expedition, and probably thought his resources too contemptible to excite any apprehension. This remissness enabled Jeswunt Rao to avail himself of the means which so plentifully exist in India, of collecting an army of adventurers, by

[1] Malcolm says he had joined a body of freebooters, and being taken, was trampled to death by an elephant. Grant Duff gives a particular account of his execution and the savage exultation of Bajee Rao at his destruction. Mahr. Hist. iii. 199.—W.

[2] Jeswunt Rao, after escaping from Nagpoor, took refuge at Dhar with Anand Rao, of the Puar tribe, to whom he rendered some important service. Compelled by the threats of Sindia to withdraw his protection, the chief of Dhar gave him a small supply of money, with which he raised a force of fourteen horsemen and a hundred and twenty ragged, half-armed foot. With this small band he commenced a course of depredations, the success of which added to his adherents. Being the son of a concubine, Jeswunt Rao refrained from claiming the rights of legitimacy, and professed himself the servant of Kundee Rao, the infant son of the murdered Mulhar Rao, a prudent regard for the feelings of his family and clan which contributed materially to his strength. He next formed an alliance with Amir Khan, a Mohammedan leader, who like the Mahratta became, subsequently, of great celebrity in the predatory warfare of Hindustan, was eventually joined by the troops of Kasi Rao, assembled at Indore, and by the end of 1788 was at the head of a considerable army: he encountered Sindia with between 60,000 and 70,000 men. Central India. See also Life of Amir Khan by H. T. Prinsep.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1802.

the prospect of plunder. It was not till the year 1801, that Sindia really became alarmed at the progress of Jeswunt Rao.[1] He then began to collect an army on the Nerbuddah, and ordered the chiefs in his dependence to join him with the smallest possible delay. On the 14th of October, 1801, a general engagement took place between the armies of the two chieftains, in the neighbourhood of Indore, the capital of the Holkar family. Holkar was completely vanquished, and fled with the loss of his artillery and baggage.[2]

In this situation of affairs, a favourable opportunity appeared to the Governor-General to present itself, of extending his favourite plan for engrossing the military power of the princes in India, or (as he himself chose rather to name it) "the system of general defensive alliance and guarantee." Colonel Collins, who had acted for some time as Resident at Futty Ghur, was, in the month of December, 1801, directed to repair to the camp of Dowlut Rao Sindia. And in the instructions of the Governor-General to that officer, dated the 15th of January, 1802, are the following words: "The events which have lately occurred in Hindostan, and the actual situation of the affairs of Dowlut Rao Sindia, appear to his Excellency to afford a more favourable opportunity, than any which has hitherto offered, of per-

[1] There is some disagreement in the dates of these events between the different authorities. According to Malcolm, Sindia marched against Holkar in 1799. Grant says, he moved from Poonah in November, 1800. The battle of Indore, according to the latter, was fought upon the day mentioned in the text. Mahr. Hist. iii. 201. W.

[2] For these particulars, of the dispute between Sindia and Holkar, see the same volume of Parliamentary Papers, p. 258, 1, 5.

suading that chieftain to become a party, in the proposed system of defensive alliance and reciprocal guarantee, under the provisions of the treaty concluded with his Highness the Nizam, on the 12th of October, 1800."

The next paragraph of this official paper is important, as exhibiting the views of the Governor-General, with regard to the effect which this defensive alliance, with any one of the Mahratta powers, would have upon all the rest. According to him it would produce one of two effects. Either it would compel them to give up their military power, in imitation of the state which had submitted to that stipulation; or, it would place them "in a dependent and subordinate condition,"—a condition in which "all their ambitious views, and aggressive designs, would be controlled." "It may reasonably," says the Governor-General, "be expected, that the success of a negotiation, for that purpose, with Dowlut Rao Sindia, will materially promote the complete accomplishment of his Excellency's views, by inducing the other Mahratta powers to concur in the proposed arrangement, with a view to avoid *the dependent and subordinate condition to which they must be reduced*, by their exclusion from an alliance, *of which the operation, with respect to them, must be, to control all ambitious views and aggressive designs on their part*, without affording to those powers the benefits of the general guarantee." The doctrine of the Governor-General, therefore, was, that, in this manner, every one of the Mahratta states would become dependent upon the English government;

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1802.

those who accepted the alliance, by the alliance; those who did not accept it, by being deprived of it; the same happy effect, in two opposite cases, by the same ingenious combination of means.

In regard to the terms of the proposed alliance, the document in question says, "The general conditions to which, in conformity to the proposed arrangement, it is desirable that Sindia should accede, are, 1st. To subsidize a considerable British force, to be stationed within his dominions: 2ndly. To cede in perpetual sovereignty to the Company, an extent of territory, the net produce of which shall be adequate to the charges of that force: 3rdly. To admit the arbitration of the British government, in all disputes and differences between Sindia and his Highness the Nizam, and, eventually, between Sindia and the other states of Hindustan: and 4thly. To dismiss all the subjects of France now in his service, and to pledge himself never to entertain in his service persons of that description."

It was declared to be "extremely desirable that Sindia should subsidize the same number of British troops, as is subsidized by his Highness the Nizam. If Sindia, however, as was suspected, would not, unless in a case of extreme necessity, agree to that proposal, the Governor-General was inclined to come down in his terms. He would consent to such a number of troops as even that of two battalions. The obligation of submitting Sindia's relations with other states, to the will of the English, it was not, in the opinion of the Governor-General, very material to exact; for this reason, that, if the

other conditions were accepted, this would follow, as a necessary consequence, whether agreeable to Sindia or not. "His Excellency," says the paper of instructions, "considers Sindia's positive consent to the third condition, to be an object of inferior importance to the rest: as, without any specific stipulation, the arbitration of the British government will necessarily be admitted, to an extent proportioned to the ascendency which that government will obtain over Sindia, under the proposed engagements—and to the power which it will possess of controlling his designs."[1]

Though Sindia had not only been disposed to receive, but forward to invite the British Resident to his camp, he would offer no specific proposition when Colonel Collins arrived. It was the wish of the British negotiator, who joined the camp of Sindia on the 20th of February, 1802, to draw from that chieftain a declaration of a desire for British assistance; and afterwards to present the scheme of the Governor-General as the condition on which that advantage might be obtained. Sindia, however, would not admit that he had any other motive for desiring the presence of a British Resident, than to cement the friendship which already subsisted between him and the British government; and to possess a more immediate channel of communication: especially, "as he was guarantee to the treaty between the English government and the Peshwa;" in this expression, exhibiting, even at this early period, his jealousy with respect to the negotiation, which was now carrying on at Poonah,

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 7—9.

BOOK VI CHAP. II. 1802.

for superseding the existing treaty with the Peshwa, by a treaty upon the Governor-General's favourite system, called "the system of defensive alliance, and mutual guarantee."

After time for ascertaining the state of Sindia's councils, the Resident informed the Governor-General, that "Sindia was anxiously desirous to preserve the relations of friendship at that time subsisting between him and the English government. At the same time," said he, "I consider it my indispensable duty to apprize your Excellency, that I am firmly persuaded he feels no inclination whatever to improve those relations." In other words, he was not yet brought so low, as willingly to descend into that situation, in which a participation in the "system of defensive alliance and mutual guarantee" would of necessity place him.

It is important, at the same time, to observe the opinion of this select servant of the Company, with regard to the influence which the treaty so eagerly pursued with the Peshwa would have upon the interests of Sindia; an influence sufficient to make him court as a favour what he now rejected as equivalent to the renunciation of his independence and power. "Indeed," says the Resident, "were the Peshwa to accept the aid of a subsidiary force from our government, I should, in this event, entertain strong hopes, that Sindia, apprehensive lest the authority of the head of the Mahratta empire might be exerted against himself, would solicit as a favour to be admitted to the benefit of the treaty of general defensive alliance." The Resident, in this instance, declared his belief, that the same effect would result

from this treaty with regard to Sindia, as the Governor-General had stated to him would be the effect of such a treaty, with any one of the Mahratta powers, upon every one of the rest.[1]

As the Resident was convinced, that, in the present circumstances, it was in vain to hope for the submission of Sindia to the system of the Governor-General, he thought the dignity of the British government would best be consulted, by forbearing to present the proposition.[2]

Holkar repaired so quickly the disaster sustained near Indore, that early in 1802 he resolved to change the scene of his operations from Malwa to Poonah. Cashee Rao, who had been allowed to repair to Kandeish, had for some time shown a disposition to aid in carrying on a joint war against Sindia, for the preservation of the Holkar dominions; but as the resources both of his mind and of his fortune were small, so he had latterly professed his determination to adhere to a system of neutrality in the dispute between Sindia and Jeswunt Rao. The release of the

[1] On this subject he further says, in the same dispatch; "It must likewise be considered; that, however much it may be the interest of the Peshwa to engage in the defensive alliance, with a view to the restoration of the due exercise of his authority, as head of the Mahratta empire; yet that Sindia is by no means in a similar predicament. On the contrary, as the Maharaja (Sindia), by the real superiority of his power, is now enabled to intimidate Bajee Rao into concessions suitable to his purposes, he is apparently urged, by principles of self-interest, not only to decline becoming a party himself in the treaty, but moreover to exert his utmost influence, in order to prevent the Peshwa from entering into engagements which, if carried to the extent originally proposed, would completely render him alike independent of Sindia, and of every other chieftain of the Mahratta state."

[2] See the Dispatch of Colonel Collins, dated Ougein, 8th of March, 1802, Ibid. p. 13—15.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1802.

infant Khundeh Rao had been always demanded by Jeswunt Rao, as a condition without which he would listen to no terms of accommodation. Representing Cashee Rao as incapacitated by mental imbecility for the exercise of the powers of government, he proclaimed the infant, head of the Holkar family; demanded, as uncle, the custody of his person, and the administration of his dominions; and gave out his design of marching to Poonah, for the purpose of receiving justice at the hand of the Peshwa; that is, of putting down the authority of Sindia, with respect to whom the Peshwa had long been placed in a state of prostrate subjection.

Before the middle of the year 1802, Holkar had prepared a large, and as compared with that of his opponents a well-disciplined army; and began his march to the south. Sindia, alive to the danger which threatened his interests at Poonah, detached a large portion of his army under one of his principal generals, Suddasheo Bhao. This force arrived in the vicinity of Poonah, at the close of the month of September; and afterwards effected a junction with the troops of the Peshwa. On the 25th of October the two armies engaged. After a warm cannonade of about three hours, the cavalry of Holkar made a general charge. The cavalry of Sindia gave way, when that of Holkar cutting in upon the line of infantry, put them to flight and obtained a decisive victory.[1]

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 258, 343.—On the 8th of March Colonel Collins, in the camp of Sindia, estimated the prospects of Holkar thus: "Since the defeat of Jeswunt Rao at Indore, where he lost the whole of his artillery, this chief has merely been able to carry on a depredatory war; and as he

Colonel Barry Close had been sent in the capacity of Resident to Poonah, in the month of December of the preceding year, with much reliance upon his approved ability and diligence for leading the Peshwa to a conformity with the earnest wishes of the English government, on the subject of the defensive alliance.

A few days before the arrival of Colonel Close, the Peshwa had communicated to Colonel Palmer, his predecessor, his consent "to subsidize a permanent force of the Company's infantry, to the extent of six battalions, with the corresponding artillery, as the Governor-General had proposed; and to assign territory in Hindustan, producing twenty-five lacs of rupees annual revenue; but that the troops should be retained within the Company's dominions at all times, except when the Peshwa should formally require their actual services." There was still a great distance between the compliance of the Peshwa, and the Governor-General's demands. "I am to have my last

possesses no other means of subsisting his troops, than by plundering, it is not unlikely that they may disperse during the rainy monsoon. Yet should he even find it practicable to retain them in his service, still they are not so formidable, either from discipline or numbers, as to create any serious grounds of alarm to this court." (Ibid. p. 14). The Governor-General, in his letter to the Secret Committee, 24th of December, 1802, speaking of the situation of the Peshwa, previous to the battle of the 24th of October, says, "The superiority of Jeswunt Rao Holkar's troops, in number and discipline, to those of the Peshwa and Dowlut Rao Sindia, rendered the issue of any contest nearly certain." Ibid. p. 29.—M. The cavalry of Holkar gave way after an unsuccessful charge upon the Peshwa's household horse, but they were stopped, and led again into action by Holkar himself. The victory was owing to his personal efforts and the steadiness of his infantry, under European officers. The fullest account of it is given by Grant; that of Malcolm agrees with it in the most essential point, Holkar's own share in restoring the day. Mahr. Hist. iii. 206. Central India, i. 226.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. II.

1802.

private audience of the Peshwa," says Colonel Palmer, "this evening: when I will make a final effort to convince his Highness of the lasting security, power, and prosperity," (such was the language which the Governor-General and his agents held even to one another upon their scheme for reducing to dependence the Princes of Hindustan,) "which he will derive from embracing your Lordship's proposals; though I apprehend, that nothing short of imminent and certain destruction will induce him to make concessions, which militate with his deep-rooted jealousy and prejudices," (so the aversion to a final renunciation of all independent power was coolly denominated;) "of which he thinks," continues the despatch, "that he has already made extraordinary sacrifices."[1]

The negotiation languished for six months, because the Governor-General, who, during a considerable part of that time, was earnestly endeavouring to accomplish a similar treaty with Dowlut Rao Sindia, did not transmit to the Resident his instructions upon the subject of this proposal, till the month of June.

During this interval, the new Resident had time to make his observations upon the character and views of the Peshwa, of which he delivered a most unfavourable report. "Every day's experience," said he, "tends to strengthen the impression, that from the first, your Lordship's amicable and liberal views, in relation to this state, have not only been discordant with the natural disposition of the Peshwa; but totally adverse to that selfish and wicked policy, which, in a certain degree, he seems to have realized:

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 39, 40.

a slight recurrence to the history of his machinations is sufficient to demonstrate, that, in the midst of personal peril, and the lowest debasement, he viewed the admission of permanent support from your Lordship with aversion."

"With regard to the Peshwa's government," he says, "it seems, if possible, to become less respectable every day. The great families of the state, with whom he is at variance, prevail over him at every contest."[1]

When the instructions of the Governor-General arrived, he remarked, upon the stipulation of the Peshwa respecting the station of the subsidized battalions, that "if the Peshwa should ever conclude subsidiary engagements on these terms, he would never apply for the aid of the stipulated force, except in cases of the utmost emergency: and his expectation, probably, is, that the knowledge of his ability to command so powerful a body of troops would alone be sufficient to give due weight to his authority, and to preclude any attempt which might otherwise be made for the subversion of it."

On the next great point, "as the Peshwa," he said, "probably derives no revenue from the territory which he proposes to assign for the charges of the subsidiary force; and his authority in it is merely nominal, his power and resources would not in any degree be reduced by the cession; and the situation of the districts would be too distant and distinct from those territories in which the Peshwa's authority is established and acknowledged, to excite in his mind

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 42, 46.

1802.

any apprehension of being overawed or controlled by the proximity of the Company's territorial power and resources. In his Excellency's judgment, therefore, the cession of the proposed territory in Hindustan would not in any degree contribute to render the Peshwa dependent on the support of the British power."

The expense, also, both of taking and of retaining possession of these territories, surrounded as they were by the territories of other Mahratta chiefs, and subject to their claims, was stated by the Governor-General as a ground of objection.

Upon the whole, he observes, "By this arrangement, the Peshwa would derive the benefit of our support, without becoming subject to our control." He, therefore, concludes; "Under all these circumstances his Excellency is decidedly of opinion that an unqualified concurrence in the Peshwa's propositions would produce more injury than benefit to the British interests in India." At the same time, "From the view," he declares, "which has thus been taken of the disposition and conduct of the Peshwa towards the British power; and from a consideration of the actual condition of his government, with reference both to its internal weakness, and to the state of its external relations, it is to be inferred, that in the actual situation of affairs, no expectation can reasonably be entertained of the Peshwa's acquiescence in any arrangement founded on the basis of the Governor-General's original propositions."

What then was to be done? Was the pursuit of the subsidizing arrangement to be resigned? The desires of the Governor-General were too ardent for

that conclusion. He resolved, on the other hand, to accede to the wishes of the Peshwa, in regard to the station of the troops, provided he would either assign a less exceptionable territory, or even engage to pay a competent annual sum from his treasury.[1]

Of the discussions on this new proposition, the detailed reports have not been communicated to parliament, and hence the particulars are unknown. Though Bajee Rao manifested, as the Governor-General informed his honourable masters, a solicitude apparently more sincere than formerly, to contract defensive engagements with the British government, he would assent to no admissible modification of the proffered plan, till Jeswunt Rao Holkar was in the vicinity of Poonah.

To whomsoever of the two antagonists the impending contest should yield the ascendency, the Peshwa perfectly foreknew that the result would be equally fatal to his authority. On the 11th of October, he transmitted through his principal minister a set of proposals to the British Resident. In these, it was proposed to agree, that the troops should be permanently stationed within his dominions, and that a district should be assigned for their maintenance in his territories bordering on the Toombudra.[2] We are informed by the Governor-General, that "during the discussions which ensued on the basis of these propositions, the evasive conduct of the Peshwa excited considerable doubts of his sincerity, even at that

[1] See, for these facts and quotations, Governor-General's Instructions to the Resident at Poonah, dated 3rd of June, 1802; papers, ut supra, p. 33—39.

[2] Papers, ut supra, p. 63.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1802.

stage of the negotiation: and that on the 24th of October, when the army of Jeswunt Rao Holkar had arrived within a few miles of Poonah, the Peshwa despatched a deputation to that chieftain, with distinct proposals for an accommodation, which Jeswunt Rao Holkar rejected."[1]

On the day of the action, the Peshwa, surrounded by a small body of troops, waited for the result, and then fled; leaving in the hands of his minister, for the British Resident, a preliminary engagement to subsidize six battalions, with their proportion of artillery, and to cede a country, either in Guzerat or the Carnatic, yielding twenty-five lacs of rupees.

The wishes of the Governor-General were accomplished, beyond his expectation. And he ratified the engagement on the day on which it was received.[2]

Two grand objects now solicited the attention of the British government. The first was the restoration of the Peshwa; and his elevation to that height of power, which, nominally his, actually that of the British government, might suffice to control the rest of the Mahratta states. The next was, to improve this event for imposing a similar treaty upon others of the more powerful Mahratta princes; or, at any rate, to prevent, by all possible means, their alarm from giving birth to an immediate war, which (especially in the existing state of the finances) might expose the present arrangement to both unpopularity and trouble.

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 30.—M. The proposals were no doubt insincere, for Grant affirms that the Peshwa entertained no doubt of Holkar's being defeated. The purport of the only mission noticed by the author of the Mahratta History, was a command to Holkan to retire. iii. 206.—W.

[2] Ibid. p. 30, 64.

1802.

The following occurrences were meanwhile taking place. The Peshwa, having repaired in the first instance to a fortress, not far distant from Poonah, afterward pursued his flight to the fortress of Mhar, on the river Bancoote, in the Concan, a maritime country on the western side of the Ghauts. Holkar, whose object it probably was to obtain possession of the person of the Peshwa, and to make the same use of his authority which had been made by Sindia, attempted, but not with sufficient rapidity, to intercept his flight.

Disappointed in this prospect, Holkar turned his views to Amrut Rao, the adopted son of the Peshwa's father, the late Ragoba; and detaching a body of troops to the place of his residence, brought him to Poonah. The Peshwa's flight from his capital was treated as an abdication, or akin to an abdication, of the government; and affairs were administered in the name of Amrut Rao.[1]

To the British Resident, who remained at Poonah, when it fell into the hands of Holkar, that chieftain, as well as Amrut Rao, diligently represented their views as friendly toward the British state, or even submissive: and they employed their earnest endeavours to prevail upon him to remain at Poonah. As this, however, might appear to afford the sanction of his government to the new authority, he thought it his duty to withdraw, and having, not without difficulty, obtained that permission, departed on the 28th of November.

[1] Not as Peshwa but as Regent for his son Vinayak Rao, who was placed by Holkar on the Musnud. The Government was, however, conducted by Amrut Rao. Mahr. Hist. iii. 223.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1802.

"At the conferences," says the Governor-General, "holden, by the Resident, with Amrut Rao and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, on the eve of the Resident's departure from Poonah, both those chieftains expressed their solicitude for the preservation of the friendship of the British government; and directly and earnestly, appealed to the Resident for his advice in the present situation of affairs. Jeswunt Rao Holkar expressly intimated a wish for the mediation of the Resident, for the express purpose of effecting an accommodation with the Peshwa."[1]

The Peshwa seemed unable to believe himself in safety, in any place accessible to Jeswunt Rao Holkar; and requested that a British ship might be sent to Bancoote, to convey him, when he should account it necessary, to Bombay. This determination the Resident at Poonah thought it would not be advisable to encourage. But, "under the determination," says the Governor-General, "which I had adopted, of employing every effort for the restoration of the Peshwa's authority, and in the actual situation of the Peshwa's affairs, it appeared to me, to be extremely desirable, that the Peshwa should immediately place himself under the protection of the British power, by retiring to Bombay."[2]

[1] Papers, ut supra, iii. p. 32, 223.

[2] Ibid. p. 31, 22. "I considered," he further says, "that this measure would preclude all hazard of precipitating hostilities with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, by any advance of the British troops, for the protection of the Peshwa's person; and would enable the British government to open a negotiation with Jeswunt Rao Holkar for the restoration of the Peshwa on the musnud of Poonah, under every circumstance of advantage. This event would also enable us to combine with our other measures, under great advantage, the proposed negotiation with Sindia, for the conclusion of defensive arrangements. It was obvious, also, that the Peshwa's

The Resident from Poonah arrived at Bombay on the 3rd of December. The Peshwa, notwithstanding the permission to place himself under the protection of the British government at Bombay, had yet remained in the Concan, with a declared desire, however, of repairing to his own city of Bassein, where he would enjoy the protection of a British force. His minister arrived at Bombay on the 8th of December. At a conference, the next day, with Colonel Close, he expressed the earnest desire of his master to conclude the proposed engagements with the British government; to the end that, all its demands being complied with, and all obstacles removed, he might as speedily as possible be restored to his authority by the British troops. On the 16th the Peshwa arrived at Bassein; and was presented with a draught of the proposed treaty. The 18th was appointed for the day on which the arrangement should be completed. After a long discussion, the whole of the draught was accepted, with some alterations in one or two of the articles. And the treaty, called, from the place of transaction, the treaty of Bassein, was signed on the 31st.

The great and leading articles were those to which the Peshwa engaged himself, by a paper left behind him, when he fled from Poonah; the permanent establishment within his dominions of the force hired from the Company; and the assignment of a portion of territory, convenient for the English, as the equi-

arrival at Bombay would afford the most favourable opportunity for the adjustment of the terms of the defensive alliance with the Peshwa, on the basis of my original propositions, with the addition of such stipulations as might appear to be expedient, with reference to the actual crisis of affairs."

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1802.

valent in exchange. Of the remaining articles, the most important was that, by which the Peshwa bound himself never to make war upon any state, but to submit all his differences with other powers to the English; and, in short, not to hold any intercourse with other states, except in concert with the English government.

A local affair of considerable importance was commodiously regulated through this treaty. The pecuniary claims of the Peshwa upon Surat, and the territory lately ceded by the Gaekwar in Guzerat, were commuted for a territory yielding a revenue of the same annual amount.

In one respect this Mahratta ally was left in a situation different from the situation of those other allies, the Nabobs of Oude and the Carnatic. In their case the English rulers insisted upon a power of ordering, agreeably to their wisdom, the internal administration of the country; or, rather, of taking it wholly into their hands; alleging, as cause, the bad government of those rulers, which it was neither consistent with the interest, nor the humanity, nor the honour of the English government, to render itself the means of preserving in existence. With regard to the one of these powers, the design was partially, with regard to the other, it was completely executed. With the Peshwa, for the present, the same demand for good government produced not the same effects. In the 17th article of the treaty, "The Honourable Company's Government," it is said, "hereby declare, that they have no manner of concern with any of his Highness's children, relations, subjects, or servants; with respect to whom his

Highness is absolute." Nay more, "the subsidiary force is to be at all times ready for such services as the due correction of his Highness's subjects and dependants, and the overawing and chastising of rebels, or exciters of disturbance." In other words, to what degree soever of misery the vices of the Peshwa's government may reduce his subjects, the English have "no manner of concern" with that: but, if these unhappy subjects make any effort to relieve themselves, the English troops shall be employed in exterminating them. When combinations of rulers take place, and the control of subjects is sufficiently removed, the treatment which is carved out for subjects is pretty much the same, whether the soil be Asiatic or European; the subjects, Mahrattas or French.[1]

The turn which the councils of Sindia might take, or might receive, in consequence of the present transactions with the Peshwa, was the object which next solicited, and that in a high degree, the attention of the British government. By a letter dated the 16th of November, 1802, the resident at Poonah is apprized, "that it is the Governor-General's intention to avail himself immediately of the state of affairs at Poonah, and of the defeat of Sindia's troops by Holkar, to renew overtures to Sindia, for the purpose of inducing that chieftain to enter into the terms of the general defensive alliance." And along with the notification of the engagements concluded

[1] This is an unfair view of the stipulation, which was not designed for the people, but their chiefs, whose turbulence and power, as in the case of Sindia and Holkar, demanded that the Peshwa should be protected against them.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. II. 1802.

with the Peshwa, Sindia received an invitation to co-operate with the British government in the restoration of that chief to his throne, and also proposals for a treaty to be concluded with himself, on terms similar to those which had been accepted by the Peshwa.[1]

In another letter, on the 22nd of the same month, the Governor-General still further unfolded his policy. "In fulfilling the obligation now imposed on us, of reinstating the Peshwa in his government and restoring his authority, his Excellency is anxious; first, to avoid all contest with either Sindia or Holkar; and secondly, to refrain from checking the progress of the present warfare between these chieftains." As the immediate march of the British troops for the restoration of the Peshwa would be likely to begin a war between Holkar and the Company, and to terminate that between him and Sindia; as the intermediate period, at the same time, "presented the most favourable crisis for the accomplishment of his Excellency's views of defensive alliance with Sindia;" and, as "a delay in the advance of the troops might afford the further advantage of improving the terms of the defensive alliance with the Peshwa, by obtaining his consent to those conditions which he theretofore rejected," the Resident was informed that there was no occasion to be in a hurry, in commencing operations for the reinstatement of the Peshwa.[2]

Though the Governor-General expressed his conviction, that "nothing but necessity would induce

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 64, 67. [2] Ibid. p. 64 65.

Sindia to co-operate in the success of the present arrangement;" he yet entertained the hope, that he would perceive his inability to prevent that success; and, as the engagement with the Peshwa would place him under the power of the English, whether he consented to the plan of hired troops, or did not consent to it, that he would account dependence, with the benefit of their alliance, less objectionable than dependence, without it.[1] The home authorities, accordingly, who are always presented with the fair face of things, were told by his Excellency, under date the 24th of December, 1802, "I entertain a confident expectation of the complete accomplishment of all our views, and of the restoration of tranquillity within the Mahratta dominions, by the means of amicable negotiation. It appears probable that Sindia will cordially co-operate with the British government, in the restoration of the Peshwa's authority; and will consent, in the actual state of his own affairs, to become a party in the proposed system of defensive arrangements."[2]

Yet the Resident at Poonah is told, in a letter dated the 30th of the same month: "Notwithstanding the Peshwa's recent recognition of his engagements with you, his Excellency the Governor-General is induced to apprehend, from the general tenor of the information contained in your despatches, and from the character and disposition of the Peshwa, that his Highness is more disposed to rely on the exertions of Sindia, than on those of the British government, for his restoration to the musnud of

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 67.

[2] Ibid. p. 33.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

Poonah." Under such views, "his Highness," he added, "may possibly evade the conclusion of a definitive treaty, on the basis of the preliminary engagement. This result will be rendered still more probable by an accommodation between Sindia and Holkar. The intelligence contained in a despatch from the Resident with Dowlut Rao Sindia, under date the 19th instant, strongly indicates the probability of that event. And it is apparent, that the principal inducement, both of Sindia and Holkar, to enter into such accommodation, is the apprehension which they entertain of the interference of the British power, for the restoration and establishment of the Peshwa's authority. It may be expected, therefore, that an accommodation between these chieftains will be accompanied by proposals to the Peshwa, under the mediation and guarantee of Sindia, of a nature which his Highness may be disposed to accept, rather than be indebted for the restoration of his authority to the interposition of the British government."[1] It was the 10th of February, 1803, before the Governor-General disclosed to the home authorities his opinion that, "the knowledge," as he expresses it, "of our arrangement with the Peshwa, may induce Dowlut Rao Sindia, and Holkar, to compromise their differences; and to offer to the Peshwa proposals for restoring his Highness to the musnud of Poonah, which his Highness may be disposed to accept, notwithstanding the actual conclusion of engagements for that purpose with the British government."[2]

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 76.

[2] Ibid. p. 68.

With regard to the policy which the state of things created by this conduct would suggest, he says; "In such an event, it is not my intention to attempt to compel the Peshwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Mahratta states."[1]

This is an admission, that the probable evil of a war with the combined Mahratta states was more than a counterbalance for the probable good to be derived from placing them all in dependence; the effect, which the treaty with the Peshwa, he said, would produce, whether they entered, or refused to enter, into the scheme for hiring the British troops.

Notwithstanding this opinion of the preponderant evil of a war with the combined Mahratta states, the Governor-General declares, that, if the Peshwa adhered to his engagements, and had the concurrence of his principal subjects, he should not allow the chance of any other opposition to deter him. Yet from that preponderant evil, the power of the Peshwa would still be the only defalcation; and how little the account which could be justly made of the power of the Peshwa, the Governor-General was amply informed.[2]

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 68.

[2] It made a very material difference, however, whether the Peshwa desired to depart from the conditions of the treaty, or whether he desired to observe them. The Governor-General would not compel him to adhere to the faith of his engagement, but if he did so voluntarily, it was, of course, incumbent upon the English faithfully to fulfil the promises of support which they had made to him. It was not a question of the degree in which the Peshwa's co-operation might or might not diminish the chances of unsuccessful war, but whether the British character for faithful obser-

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

To one view, taken by the Marquis Wellesley, of the question of restoring the Mahratta sovereign, philosophy will not withhold unqualified praise. "The stipulations of treaty" (says he, in his instructions, dated 2nd of February, 1803, to the Governor of Fort St. George), "on which I founded my intention to facilitate the restoration of the Peshwa's authority, originated in a supposition that the majority of the Mahratta jaghiredars, and the body of the Peshwa's subjects, entertain a desire of co-operating in that measure. Justice and wisdom would forbid any attempt to impose upon the Mahrattas a ruler, whose restoration to authority was adverse to every class of his subjects. The recent engagements with the Peshwa involve no obligation of such an extent. Whatever might be the success of our arms, the ultimate objects of these engagements could not be attained, by a course of policy so violent and extreme. If, therefore, it should appear, that a decided opposition to the restoration of the Peshwa is to be expected, from the majority of the

vance of their political engagements should be forfeited or preserved. No risk of war could be put in balance with national reputation. It is true, that the Peshwa had scarcely signed the treaty of Bassein, when, with that duplicity which characterized his whole reign, and eventually hurled him from his throne, he began intriguing with Sindia and the Raja of Berar, to instigate them to hostilities against the English, with the professed, but, possibly, insincere hope, that they would release him from the dependence to which he had precipitately subjected himself. This negotiation was kept secret from his new allies; and any show of reluctance on their part to reconduct him to Poonah, would, no doubt, have been met by the most vehement remonstrance, and earnest protestations of fidelity and attachment. They had no present reason, therefore, to suppose that they were forcing upon the Peshwa an unacceptable alliance, and as long as he manifested the will to keep his engagements, they were bound in honour and in policy to hazard war, if war was the consequence of the treaty which they had formed.—W.

Mahratta jaghiredars, and from the body of the Peshwa's subjects, I shall instantly relinquish every attempt to restore the Peshwa to the musnud of Poonah."[1]

This virtuous example, till such a time as the majority of the people in every civilized country have become sufficiently enlightened to see the depravity of the case in its own essence, will help to stamp with infamy the most flagitious perhaps of all the crimes which can be committed against human nature, the imposing upon a nation, by force of foreign armies, and for the pleasure or interest of foreign rulers, a government, composed of men, and involving principles, which the people for whom it is destined have either rejected from experience of their badness, or repel from their experience, or expectation of better. Even where the disparity of civilization and knowledge were very great; and where it were beyond dispute, that a civilized country was about to bestow upon a barbarous one the greatest of all possible benefits, a good and beneficent government; even there, it would require the strongest circumstances to justify the employment of violence or force. But, where nations, upon a level only with another in point of civilization, or perhaps below it, proceed with bayonets to force upon it a government confessedly bad, and prodigiously below the knowledge and civilization of the age, under the pretence of fears that such a nation will choose a worse government for itself, these nations, or their rulers, if the people have no

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 78.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

voice in the matter, are guided by views of benefit to themselves, and despise the shame of trampling upon the first principles of humanity and justice.

In paying the homage which he counted due to the will of a nation of Mahrattas, the Marquis Wellesley was not making a sacrifice of interests which he held in low esteem. In his address to the home authorities, dated the 24th of December, 1802, he declared his conviction, that "those defensive engagements" which he was desirous of "concluding with the Mahratta states, were essential to the complete consolidation of the British empire in India, and to the future tranquillity of Hindustan."[1] Yet the complete consolidation of the British empire in India, and the future tranquillity of Hindustan, which could never exist till a sufficient bridle was put in the mouth of the Mahratta power, he thought it his duty to sacrifice, or to leave to the care of unforeseen events, rather than violate the freedom of will, in this important concern, of the people of one of the Mahratta states.

When the Governor-General resolved on restoring the Peshwa, upon the supposition that he and his subjects were consenting to the plan, a very low estimate of the opposition to be expected from other quarters was presented by the Governor-General to his superiors, in his language of the 10th of February, 1803. "No reason," said he, "exists, to justify an apprehension, that in the event supposed, Sindia would proceed to such an extremity, as to make opposition, either singly, or united with Holkar.

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 33.

Nor is any such desperate course of proceeding to be apprehended from the Raja of Berar. Uncombined with the power of Sindia, Holkar will not probably venture to resist the Peshwa. Holkar also has anxiously solicited the arbitration of the British government with respect to his claims. He has transmitted distinct propositions with that view to Lieutenant-Colonel Close."[1]

The substance of the propositions was that the Peshwa should give to him a crore of rupees for the payment of his troops; that he should also give to him a fortress, as he had given Ahmednuggur to Sindia; that he should effect the release of Kundee Rao; and grant him investiture, as the heir and representative of the Holkar family. Both the Governor-General and the Peshwa held these demands inadmissible. So far from yielding money to Holkar, the Peshwa thought he ought much rather to get money from him, on account of the depredations committed on his dominions. The gift of a fortress to one person was no reason, he said, why he should be called upon to give one to another: and as to the proposition for disinheriting Cashee Rao, it was forbidden by justice, and by the investiture which had been bestowed upon him during the life of his father; at the same time there was an expedient for reconciling the interests of both, as Cashee Rao had no children, and might secure the succession of Kundee Rao by adoption. The Governor-General held, that the rights of Cashee Rao, founded on descent, should on no

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 69.

1803.

account be allowed to be disputed. But he was of opinion, that the Peshwa ought willingly to grant a considerable sum of money, to obtain the departure of Holkar; and was even ready to guarantee a loan raised for that purpose; And, if the grant of a fort and jaghire would suffice to avert a rupture, it would not, he conceived, be good policy to withhold it.[1]

"On the receipt of these instructions," says the Governor-General, "Colonel Close endeavoured to persuade his Highness the Peshwa, to offer to Holkar such concessions as might induce Holkar to compromise the subsisting differences, and to admit his Highness's peaceable return to his capital. His Highness, however, manifested an insuperable aversion to offer any concession to Holkar, whom he considered to be a rebel against the legitimate authority of the sovereign power of the Mahratta empire." It then remained for Colonel Close to communicate by letter to Holkar, the sentiments of the Governor-General on the subject of his demands; the assurance, that the British government would use its influence to adjust his claims upon Sindia; an offer, to guarantee any adjustment which he might accomplish with the Peshwa; and, lastly, the expression of a hope that he would not oppose the execution of the recent engagements between the British and Poonah states.[2]

The expectations of the Governor-General that he might be able, through the operation of the new treaty with the Peshwa, to intimidate Sindia into

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 414, 115, 82, 83.

[2] Ibid, p. 86, 87.

an acceptance of the chains which he had forged for him, he did not easily relinquish. That chieftain, after such operations as he had in his power for the increase and equipment of his army, proceeded towards the south; crossed the Nerbuddah on the 4th of February; and on the 23rd arrived in the vicinity of Boorhanpore. Colonel Collins, who had left the camp of Sindia early in the preceding May, but had received in the month of December commands to return for the purpose of proposing to him a treaty, on similar terms with that of Bassein, arrived at his camp on the 27th of February. "The advices," says the Governor-General in his address to the home authorities of the 19th of April, 1802, "which I received from that officer, and from other quarters, induced me to entertain suspicions that Dowlut Rao Sindia meditated an accommodation with Jeswunt Rao Holkar; and a confederacy with that chieftain, and with the Raja of Berar, for the purpose of frustrating the success of the arrangements concluded between the British government and the Peshwa: without, however, intending to proceed to the desperate extremity of provoking a contest with the British arms.

"This suspicion," he adds, "was corroborated, by the artifices practised at the camp of Sindia, upon the arrival of Colonel Collins, with a view of eluding the communication of the propositions with which Colonel Collins was charged, under my authority. And the appearance of Sindia's intentions became still more unsatisfactory, from the evasive, and indirect, or vexatious replies, which Colonel Collins received to my propositions, after

he had, at length, obtained access to Dowlut Rao Sindia."

1803. At an interview, which the Resident at last obtained with Sindia on the 24th of March, that chief informed him that a messenger was on his way to his camp from the Peshwa, for the purpose of explaining to him the nature and extent of the engagements recently concluded between the Peshwa and the British government, and that till the communications of this agent were received, he could not give a decided answer to the proposition about concluding with the English a treaty similar to that of Bassein. He gave, at the same time, the strongest assurance, that he had no intention to obstruct the execution of the agreement between the Peshwa and the British government; on the other hand, that he desired to improve the friendship at present happily existing between that government and the Peshwa, as well as himself.

In this declaration, the Governor-General professed his belief that Sindia was perfectly sincere. "Nor is that sincerity," said he, "inconsistent with a desire to delay his assent to the treaty of Bassein, and to the propositions immediately affecting his separate interests, until he shall have received a direct communication from the Peshwa;—or incompatible with the project for a confederacy between Sindia, Holkar, and the Raja of Berar, for purposes of a defensive nature—which I consider to be the extreme object of Sindia, in negotiating such a confederacy, without any views whatever of hostility towards the British power."

Berar was the next, in power and consequence,

among the Mahratta states. "The intelligence which I have received from the court of the Raja of Berar," says the Governor-General, "indicates that chieftain's dissatisfaction at the conclusion of defensive engagements between the British government and his Highness the Peshwa.—Whatever may be the aversion of the Raja of Berar to the interposition of the British government, in the affairs of the Mahratta empire, any attempt, on the part of that chieftain, to obstruct the execution of the treaty of Bassein, would be inconsistent with the systematic caution of his character; and imprudent, in the actual state of his military power, and in the exposed situation of his territories."[1]

At so late a date, therefore, as the 19th of April, 1803, the home authorities were assured by their Indian substitute, that no prospect of a war, the offspring and consequence of the treaty of Bassein, presented itself in any quarter.[2] The same language was employed even so late as the 20th of June. "Every circumstance," he assured them, connected with the restoration of the Peshwa, justifies a confident expectation of the complete and pacific accomplishment of the beneficial objects of the late alliance.—Although the information," he added, "contained in Lietenant-Colonel Close's address to

[1] For the dispatch from which these quotations and facts are extracted, see papers, ut supra, p. 85—91.

[2] It cannot be justly affirmed that they were assured there was no prospect of a war. The especial purport of the dispatch of the 19th of April, was to report upon the suspicious conduct of the Mahratta chiefs: that it might not end in war was argued upon obvious considerations of what their interests were; but it is no where positively affirmed that there would not be war, and its possibility is implied by the whole tenor of the letter. Dispatches, iii. 72.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

your Honourable Committee, and the tenor of latest advices from the courts of Dowlut Rao Sindia, and the Raja of Berar, tend to countenance the rumours of a projected confederacy between these chieftains and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, the existence of any such confederacy is still a subject of considerable doubt.—If any such combination has been formed, its object is probably restricted to purposes of a defensive nature, without involving any views of hostility towards the British power.—The local situation, and comparative power and resources, of Sindia and Ragojee Bhonslah, preclude the apprehension of any attempt of these chiefs to subvert the Peshwa's government, or the treaty of Bassein, at the desperate hazard of a war with the British power. The situation of Holkar's power is entirely precarious and accidental. The instability of the resources of that adventurer reduces the continuance of his power to the utmost degree of uncertainty; and absolutely deprives him of the means of opposing any systematic or formidable resistance to the operation of an alliance with the Poonah state.—My instructions to Colonel Collins, of the 5th of May, and to Lieutenant-Colonel Close, of the 7th May, together with my letter of the 15th May to the Raja of Berar, have probably already produced an arrangement of a pacific nature, with all the chiefs of the Mahratta empire, whose formal accession to the treaty of Bassein has not yet been signified to me."[1]

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 98. 99.—M. Dispatches, iii. It is very evident, from the tenor of the letter of the 20th of June, that the Governor-General was now too sanguine in his anticipations of continued tran-

The Peshwa received not the treaty, ratified by the Governor-General in council, earlier than the 18th of March, 1803. The Governor-General informs the Court of Directors, that "he received it with demonstrations of the highest satisfaction."[1]

As early, however, as the month of November preceding, the Governor of Fort St. George, under intimations from both the Governor-General and the Resident at Poonah, was induced to assemble a considerable army at Hurryhur, on the Mysore frontier; which, under the character of an army of observation, might be ready to be employed as events should determine. The Governor of Bombay received, in like manner, instructions to hold in readiness for immediate service the disposable force of that presidency. And a considerable detachment of the subsidiary force at Hyderabad was, through the Resident, directed to be placed in a similar state of preparation.[2]

quil relations with Sindia and the Raja of Berar. He gave them credit for a more accurate estimate of their own force, and that of the English, than they were capable of forming; and he was not aware of the encouragement to interfere which they received from the Peshwa. At the same time it is equally evident that he considered the result as uncertain, and the home authorities must have seen clearly the probability of hostilities. It cannot be affirmed, as it is the object of the text to insinuate, that they were imposed upon by partial misrepresentation. The possible occurrence of the events which took place, however improbable it may have been thought, is decidedly expressed in this paragraph of the letter of the 20th of June: "The judicious arrangements which Major-General Wellesley has effected for the disposition of the troops under his command, is calculated to meet every emergency of affairs, even under the improbable supposition that Sindia, the Raja of Berar, and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, have really entertained designs of a hostile nature against the British Government or the allies."—W.

[1] Governor-General's Narrative of the late Transactions in the Mahratta Empire. Ibid. p. 309.

[2] Narrative, ut supra. Ibid. p. 307.—M. These arrangements were

BOOK VI
CHAP. 11.

1803.

At the end of February the whole of the subsidiary or hired force in the service of the Nizam, under the command of Colonel Stevenson, together with 6000 infantry, and 9000 of that Prince's native cavalry, marched from the capital towards the western frontier of the Hyderabad dominions, and reached Paraindah, distant 116 miles from Poonah, on the 25th of March.

From the army assembled at Hurryhur under the immediate command of General Stuart, the General-in-Chief of the forces under the Presidency of Madras, a detachment, consisting of one regiment of European, and three of native cavalry, two regiments of European, and six battalions of native infantry, with a due proportion of artillery, amounting, in the whole, to 1709 cavalry, and 7890 infantry, exclusive of 2500 horse belonging to the Raja of Mysore, began to advance towards Poonah, on the 8th of March. For the command of this detachment; a service, requiring, as he affirmed, considerable skill, both military and diplomatic; the Governor of Fort St. George recommended the brother of the Governor-General, Major-General the Honourable Arthur Wellesley, as a man who, not only possessed, in a high degree, the other requisite gifts, but who, by his command at Seringapatam, had been accustomed to transactions with the jaghiredars of the Poonah state, and successful in gaining their confidence and respect. A man so related, and so recommended, was not likely to see the merits of any competitor set in preference to his own.[1]

subservient to the restoration of the Peshwa in case of opposition, apprehended chiefly from Holkar.—W.

[1] The spirit of this remark cannot be mistaken; but it is not the less

On the 12th of April, the force under General Wellesley crossed the Toombudra. On the 15th, the distance was not great between him and Colonel Stevenson, who arrived at Aklooss. Jeswunt Rao Holkar, who had some time quitted Poonah, arrived at Chandore, 300 miles from Poonah, on the same day on which Colonel Stevenson arrived at Aklooss; and nothing remained to oppose the British army. It was unnecessary, therefore, to carry the whole of the troops to Poonah, where the country was too recently and severely ravaged, to yield any supplies. Colonel Stevenson was directed to place the troops of the Nizam at Gardoon, within the Nizam's frontier, and to take post with the subsidiary troops, augmented by the King's Scotch Brigade, further up the Beema, near its junction with the Mota Mola.

Amrut Rao was left at Poonah, with a guard of about 1500 men, alone, and helpless, when Holkar marched. It was, nevertheless, reported, that this defenceless individual, who from first to last is represented, by the English themselves, as utterly averse to the part which he was constrained by Holkar to act, had it in contemplation to burn the city of Poonah; that is, to render his peace impracticable with the people into whose hands he saw that he must inevitably fall. Intimation of this report, and, it would seem, of some belief in the danger which it

true that General Wellesley was eminently fitted for the duty by his popularity with the Mahratta Jagirdars of the South, and his knowledge of the country and the people. See his Memorandum upon Operations in the Mahratta territory. Dispatches, i. 111; also, Correspondence, 91, 92, 94, &c.—W.

BOOK VI. CHAP. 11.

1803.

announced, was transmitted (repeatedly we are told) by Colonel Close to General Wellesley. The Peshwa, by whom it is not wonderful that it was believed, transmitted an urgent request that General Wellesley would detach some of the Poonah officers with their troops to provide for the safety of his family. Counting the Poonah officers, with their troops, a security ill-proportioned to the danger, General Wellesley resolved to attempt an unexpected arrival. Intelligence was received on the 19th, that Amrut Rao was still at Poonah on the 18th, and had removed the family of the Peshwa to Servagur; which was concluded to be a step preparatory to the burning of the town. General Wellesley, therefore, taking with him only the cavalry, and making a night march through a difficult pass, and a rugged country, arrived at Poonah on the 20th, having accomplished, from the evening of the 19th, a march of forty, and from the morning of that day, that is, in a period of about thirty-two hours, a march of sixty miles.[1] Amrut Rao heard of the march of the British cavalry, on the morning of the 20th, and quitted Poonah, but without any act implying that he had ever entertained a thought of setting fire to the place.

In conducting the Peshwa to Poonah, it only now remained to provide a sufficient quantity of pomp. The description shall be given in the words of the Governor-General himself. "During these transactions, arrangements were made by the Governor of Bombay, and by Lieutenant-Colonel Close, for the

[1] Dispatches of the Duke of Wellington, i. 142.—W.

1803.

march of the Peshwa towards Poonah. A detachment, consisting of his Majesty's 78th regiment (which left Bengal on the 7th of February, and arrived at Bombay on the 5th of April, 1803), five companies of his Majesty's 84th regiment, a proportion of artillery, and 1035 sepoys—in all 2205 men, was formed, and placed under the command of Colonel Murray, of his Majesty's 84th regiment, as an escort to his Highness, who left Bassein, attended by Colonel Close, on the 27th of April.

"On the 7th of May, the Peshwa passed General Wellesley's camp, at Panowallah, near Poonah. On the 13th, his Highness, attended by his brother Chimnajee Appa, and by a numerous train of the principal chiefs of the Mahratta empire, proceeded towards the city of Poonah; and, having entered his palace, resumed his seat upon the musnud, and received presents from his principal servants.

"During the procession, the British Resident, accompanied by his suite, paid his compliments to his Highness, when a salute was fired by the British troops, encamped in the vicinity of Poonah, under the command of General Wellesley. This salute was immediately answered from the fortress of Seonghur.

"While the procession passed the bridge into the city, a second salute was fired from the British camp; and as the Peshwa approached the palace, salutes were fired from the several posts of the Mahratta troops. At sunset salutes were fired from all the hill-forts in the vicinity of Poonah."[1]

[1] Governor-General's Narrative. Ibid. 307—311.

BOOK VI CHAP. II. 1803.

Notwithstanding the confident expectation which the Governor-General had expressed to the home authorities, not only on the 19th of April, but as late as the 20th of June, that no war would rise out of the treaty of Bassein;[1] yet before that time, as he himself informs us, "he had great cause to doubt the sincerity of Sindia's professions; while the increasing rumours of a hostile confederacy against the British government, between that chieftain and the Raja of Berar, rendered it indispensably necessary to ascertain, with the least practicable delay, whether the British government were likely to be exposed to a contest with the confederated chieftains. These considerations determined the Governor-General to lose no time in furnishing Colonel Collins with detailed instructions for the guidance of his conduct, in this important and delicate crisis of affairs. With a view to expedition, the Governor-General's instructions were, in the first instance, transmitted in the form of notes, under date the 5th of May, 1803, and were afterwards formed into a detailed despatch, which was forwarded to Colonel Collins on the 3rd of June."[2]

Nay, when the time arrived, at which it was desirable to make it appear, that the hostile mind of Sindia, and not provocation by the British government, had produced the calamity of war, the Governor-General actually enters into an argument to prove, that from an early date, he had evidence which rendered in no respect doubtful the existence of hostile projects in the mind of Sindia. After a

[1] Vide supra, p. 416.

[2] Narrative, ut supra, p. 317, 318.—M. Dispatches, iii. 120.—W.

display of the motives, in their own ambition, which Sindia and the Raja of Berar had for aversion to the treaty of Bassein, "The belief," he says, "that those chieftains entertained designs hostile to the British government, at the earliest stages of the negotiation between the Resident and Dowlut Rao Sindia, is supported by the information which the Governor-General has from time to time received of the proceedings of that chieftain." Of this information he specifies three instances; one contained in a letter of Colonel Collins, dated the 9th of March; a second received on the 17th of June; and the third alone, not more conclusive than the former, sent by Colonel Collins on the 14th, not received till after the date of his pacific declaration to the home authorities. "These facts," he then subjoins, "reciprocally confirm each point of the evidence of Sindia's hostile projects; and combined with information, at various times communicated, by the Resident with Dowlut Rao Sindia, of the proceedings of that chieftain; with the repeated rumours of the formation of a hostile confederacy between Dowlut Rao Sindia, and the Raja of Berar, and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and with the tenor and result of the Resident's negotiations, must be considered to amount to full proof of the alleged design of subverting the alliance formed between the British government and the Peshwa."[1]

The Resident with Dowlut Rao Sindia, having received the Governor-General's instructions, obtained an audience of that chief on the 28th of May. He

[1] Narrative, ut supra. Ibid. p. 334.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

was encamped at a place called Chickley, not far from Boorhanpore, where his own dominions border on those of the Raja of Berar. The conference was opened, on the part of the Resident, by commmunicating to Sindia the treaty of Bassein, of which a copy was presented and read. "When the whole of the treaty had been distinctly explained to the Maharaja, I then asked him," says the Resident, "whether he thought it contained any thing injurious to his just rights; since I had reason to think some doubts had arisen in his mind on this head?" —It was one of his ministers who thought proper to reply; "acknowledging," says the Resident, "that the treaty did not contain any stipulation prejudicial to the rights of the Maharaja; to which the latter assented."

"I proceeded," says Colonel Collins, "to state—that negotiations had of late been carried on between Dowlut Rao Sindia and the Berar Raja—that these chiefs were, I understood, to have an interview shortly, somewhere in the vicinity of this place — that the Maharaja had concluded a peace with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, in whose camp a vakeel also now resided on the part of Ragojee Bhonslah—that Sindia had likewise avowed an intention of proceeding with his army to Poonah, accompanied by the Berar Raja—and that, on combining these circumstances, I could not but suspect that this court meditated designs adverse to the interests of the British government;—for, since his Highness the Peshwa was restored to the musnud of Poonah, the presence of the Maharaja at that capital could not now be of any use, but, on the contrary, might be

1803.

productive of evil consequences—nor could the longer continuance of the Maharaja in the Deccan be necessary to his security, since he had come to an accommodation with the only enemy from whom he had any thing to apprehend, south of the Nerbudda; That, therefore, I felt it my duty to require an unreserved explanation from this court, as well respecting the intent of the proposed interview between the Maharaja and the Berar Raja, as regarding the nature of the engagements entered into by those chiefs with Jeswunt Rao Holkar—as their recent union, and present proceedings, induced some suspicion, that they were confederated, either for the purpose of invading the territories of our allies, his Highness the Peshwa, and Nabob Nizam; or of subverting the arrangements lately concluded between the British government and Bajee Rao."[1]

The Resident repeated the assurance of the peaceable and even amicable views of the British government; and stated the arguments of himself and of the Governor-General to prove to Sindia, not only that the British government and the Peshwa had a perfect right to contract the engagements into which they had entered, but that the interests of Sindia, by that means, were in no respect affected.

On the part of Sindia it was, in like manner, affirmed, that he had no intention whatever to invade either the territory of his Highness the Peshwa, or of the Nabob Nizam. But, in regard to

[1] Colonel Collins's dispatch, dated, 29th May, 1803. Ibid, p. 153.—M. Dispatches, iii. 159.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

the negotiations with the Berar Raja and Holkar, the Resident was informed, that Sindia could afford him no explanations till the conference between him and Ragojee Bhonslah had taken place. No mode of address, conciliatory or menacing, was left untried by the Resident to extort a declaration, whether opposition to the treaty of Bassein was or was not in contemplation. Sindia was informed, that if he maintained his present suspicious attitude, the British government would be called upon to make preparations upon his frontier, which would be attacked in every part, the moment that intelligence was received of his accession to any hostile confederacy. After various expostulations, both with the ministers and Sindia himself, the Resident says, that he turned at last to Sindia, and "conjured him, in language both urgent and conciliatory, to remove all his doubts and suspicions, by an immediate and candid avowal of his intentions."

"Dowlut Rao," he continues, "in reply to these instances on my part, said, that he could not, at present, afford me the satisfaction I demanded, without a violation of the faith which he had pledged to the Raja of Berar. He then observed, that the Bhonslah was distant no more than forty coss from hence, and would probably arrive here in the course of a few days: that immediately after his interview with the Raja, I should be informed whether it would be peace or war."

It is proper to state, that the Resident, in answer to his remonstrance against the march of Sindia and the Raja of Berar to Poonah, received a solemn assurance, which he appears not to have disbelieved,

that the Peshwa, after his return to his capital, had repeatedly written to the Maharaja and the Berar Raja, inviting them both to Poonah. It is also proper to give the following circumstance, in the words of the Resident; "Neither Sindia," says he, "nor his ministers, made any remarks on the treaty of Bassein, nor did they request a copy of it."[1]

It will hardly be pretended that the words of Sindia, "after my interview with the Raja, you shall be informed whether it will be peace or war," yielded any information which was not conveyed by the more evasive expressions of his ministers; "till after the Maharaja's interview with the Raja, it is impossible for him to afford you satisfaction with regard to the declaration which you require." That the words were intended by Sindia to convey a menace or insult, there is not a single circumstance to countenance the slightest suspicion. And it is visible from the words of the Resident, that they were not by him understood in that sense. "These words he delivered," says he, "with much seeming composure. I then asked, whether I must consider this declaration as final, on his part; which question was answered in the affirmative by the ministers of Dowlut Rao Sindia. Here the conference, which had lasted three hours, ended; and I soon after took a respectful leave of the Maharaja."

The Governor-General describes as very great the effect which was produced upon his mind, by the phrase of the Maharaja. "This unprovoked menace of hostility," says he, "and the insult offered

[1] Dispatch, ut supra. Ibid. p. 153, 154.

BOOK VI CHAP. II. 1803.

to the British government, by reference of the question of peace or war to the result of a conference with the Raja of Berar, who, at the head of a considerable army, had reached the vicinity of Dowlut Rao Sindia's camp, together with the indication which it afforded of a disposition on the part of those chieftains to prosecute the supposed objects of their confederacy, rendered it the duty of the British government to adopt, without delay, the most effectual measures for the vindication of its dignity, and for the security of its rights and interests, and those of its allies, against any attempt on the part of the confederates, to injure or to invade them."[1]

In consequence of a movement of Holkar towards the frontier of the Nizam, and some depredations committed in the vicinity of Aurungabad, General Wellesley, at the end of April, had directed Colonel Stevenson, with the British force under his command, and the united troops of the Nizam, to move northwards to that city. Towards the end of May, General Stuart, with the army under his command, amounting to three companies of European artillery, one regiment of European, and two regiments of native cavalry, three corps of European infantry, and five battalions of sepoys, with a large train of artillery, crossed the Toombudra, and proceeded forward to Mudgul, a position where, without abandoning the defence of the English frontier, he was sufficiently near the scene of action, to support the advanced detachment, and overawe those who might be found refractory among the Mahratta chiefs. On the 4th

[1] Letter from Governor-General to home authorities, dated 1st August. Ibid. p. 148.

1803.

of June, Major-General Wellesley marched from Poonah with the main body of the forces under his command, and on the 15th, encamped at Augah, near Sindia's fortress of Ahmednuggur, at the distance of about 80 miles from Poonah. "The total number of British troops," says the Governor-General, "prepared on the 4th of June, 1803, on the western side of India (exclusive of Guzerat), to support the arrangements with the Peshwa, amounted to 28,244 men; of this number, 16,823 were under the immediate command of General Wellesley, and destined for active operations against the confederated chieftains, in the event of its being necessary to proceed to hostilities against those chiefs."[1]

The expense of bringing such an army as this into the field was no trifling price to pay for those "arrangements with the Peshwa," which this great force was "prepared on the 4th of June, 1803, to support." Yet this was not enough; for, immediately on the intelligence of Sindia's phrase about "peace or war," the Governor-General issued private instructions to the Commander-in-Chief of the Company's forces in India, to assemble the Bengal army on the Company's western frontier, and to prepare for an eventual war.

It deserves to be noticed, that the letter of the Governor-General to the home authorities, assuring them confidently that no war would rise out of the recent alliance contracted with the Peshwa, was dated on the 20th of June. The instructions to the Commander-in-Chief, which directed the assembling

[1] Narrative, ut supra. Ibid. p. 325, 326.

BOOK VI CHAP. II. of the army, and laid down a plan of the war, were dated on the 28th of the same month.

1803. In the demand for prompt decision which might arise in the present eventual position of the British government with the Mahratta states, the Governor-General considered that his own distance from the scene of action would require a dangerous suspension of operations, if the power of adapting measures to the exigencies as they arose were not consigned to some individual upon the spot. So much would of necessity depend upon the person at the head of the military force, that a peculiar advantage would arise from combining in his hands, if adapted to the trust, the political powers which it was thought advisable to convey. In General Wellesley the Governor-General imagined he saw the requisite qualifications very happily combined. That officer was accordingly vested with the general control of all affairs in Hindustan and the Deccan, relative either to negotiation or war with the Mahratta states. The instructions with which he was furnished for guidance in the use of those extraordinary powers are dated on the 26th of June. The new authority was to pass to General Stuart, as Commander-in-Chief at the Madras presidency, if circumstances (an exigency very unlikly to arise) should render it necessary for that officer to unite the whole force of the army in the field, and to assume in person the general command. And the plenipotentiary commission of General Wellesley remained subject, of course, to the commands of the authority from which it was derived.[1]

[1] Narrative, ut supra, p. 149, 162.

On the 13th of May, the Governor-General addressed a letter to Sindia, and another to the Raja of Berar. These letters, while they paid to these chieftains the compliment of conveying immediately from the head of the English government, intimation of the treaty of Bassein, and affirmed that no injury was done to the rights of either of them by that engagement, which it was within the undoubted competence of the Peshwa to contract, offered to each the benefit of a similar engagement, if they were sufficiently wise to see how deeply their interests were concerned in it; asserted the pacific views of the British government, even if they should reject this generous offer; informed them, however, of the suspicions, which several parts of their recent conduct had a tendency to raise, of their intention to form a hostile confederacy against the late arrangements; directed them, if they wished that their pacific declarations should be deemed sincere, to abstain from occupying with their armies an alarming position on the frontier of the Nizam, the British ally; desired Sindia, in particular, to carry back his army to the northern side of the Nerbudda; and declared to them, that, if they persisted in maintaining a warlike attitude, the British government must place itself in a similar situation, and the moment they rendered their hostile designs indubitable, would in its own defence be constrained to attack them.[1]

[1] Narrative, ut supra, p. 133—136.—M.

There was other correspondence with the Raja of Berar. Prior to the date of Lord Wellesley's letter, or on the 4th of May, the Raja wrote to the Nizam, to announce his proposed interview with Sindia, and thus explained its object. "After a meeting shall have taken place, and an arrangement for the reconciliation and union between Sindia and Holkar

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

The Raja of Berar, having arrived within one march of Sindia's camp on the 3rd of June, was met by that Prince on the following morning. "The secretary of the British Resident, who was despatched to him with a complimentary message on the 5th, he received with distinguished attention: and he expressed, with apparent sincerity," says the Governor-General, "his solicitude to maintain the relations of friendship which had so long subsisted between the British government and the state of Berar." A conference between the chieftains took place on the 8th. On the 9th, the British Resident sent to importune Sindia for the answer which he promised after his interview with the Raja of Berar. Having received an evasive reply, the Resident addressed, on the 12th, a memorial to Sindia, informing him, that if he should now refuse to give an explicit account of his intentions, and should continue with his army on the south side of the Nerbudda, "such refusal or delay would be regarded as an avowal of hostile designs against the British government." The Resident re-

shall have been effected, a specific plan for the adjustment of the state and government of Rao Pundit Pradhaun, (the Peshwa,) such as the honour and integrity of the Rauj indispensably calls for, and is calculated for the prosperity of the country, shall, with a due attention to the complexion of the times, be maturely devised and executed." This letter was, of course, communicated to the British government, and Lord Wellesley again, on the 22nd of May, addressed the Berar Raja to express his surprise and disappointment at learning so plain an avowal of an intention to form a confederacy for the subversion of the arrangements concluded with the Peshwa. He also apprized the Raja, that any advance into the territories of the Nizam would be considered as an act of hostile aggression; exhorted him earnestly to return peaceably into his territories, and distinctly intimated that the question of peace or war between the two states depended entirely upon the Raja's conduct. The interview that followed was, therefore, most unequivocally an act of defiance, and equivalent to a declaration of war. Dispatches, iii. 104, and App. 661.—W.

quested either the satisfaction which he was commissioned to demand, or an escort to convey him from Sindia's camp.[1]

Having received a verbal message, which he regarded as an evasion, stating that the required explanation should be afforded in two or three days, the Resident informed the Maharaja, that he received this communication as a final answer, refusing the satisfaction which the British government required; and that he purposed leaving his camp without further delay. The two Mahratta chiefs invented expedients for preventing the departure of the Resident, and at the same time evaded his endeavours to obtain a declaration of their designs. At length, on the 4th of July, he obtained an audience of both together in the tent of the Raja of Berar. He entertained them with the old story—"That the treaty of Bassein" (I quote the words of the Governor-General, as combining his authority with that of his agent) "contained no stipulation injurious to the rights of any of the feudatory Mahratta chieftains; but, on the contrary, expressly provided for their security and independence—That the Governor-General regarded the Raja of Berar, and Sindia, as the ancient friends of the British power; and was willing to improve the existing connexion between their states and the British government—That the British government only required a confirmation of the assurance made by Sindia, that he had no intention whatever to obstruct the completion of the engagements lately concluded at Bassein, together with a similar assurance on the part of the Raja of Berar—And that it was the

[1] Narrative, ut supra, p. 166, 323.

earnest desire of the Governor-General to promote the prosperity of the respective governments of Dowlut Rao Sindia, and the Raja of Berar; so long as they refrained from committing acts of aggression against the English and their allies."

The Mahratta chiefs did not think proper to make any remarks upon the assertions and argumentation of the British Resident. They contented themselves with declaring, through the mouth of the Berar minister, by whom on their part the discourse was principally held, that it was the duty of the Peshwa to have consulted with them as chiefs of the Mahratta state, before he concluded a treaty which so deeply affected the interests of that state; and, moreover, that they had a variety of observations to make upon the stipulations, themselves, of the treaty of Bassein. The British minister insisted, as he had done so frequently before, on the right of the Peshwa to make a treaty for himself; but, with regard to the observations proposed to be made upon the several articles of the treaty of Bassein, he requested they might be committed to writing, and submitted to the consideration of the Governor-General.

Notwithstanding these allegations of grounds of complaint, the Mahrattas re-affirmed their sincere disposition to cultivate the friendship of the British government; declared that they had no design whatever to oppose any engagements with it into which the Peshwa might have entered; and promised that their armies should neither advance to Poonah, nor ascend the Adjuntee Ghaut, across the mountainous ridge which separated their present position from the frontier of the Nizam. Remarking, however, that

the British troops had crossed the Godaveri river, and were approaching the Adjuntee Ghaut; they requested that Colonel Collins would use his endeavours to prevent their advance. The Colonel replied that it was incumbent upon Sindia to lead his army across the Nerbudda, and the Raja of Berar to return to Nagpoor, if they wished their actions to appear in conformity with their pacific declarations; and in that case, the British army, he doubted not, would also be withdrawn.[1]

On the 14th of July, General Wellesley addressed a letter, couched in respectful terms, to Dowlut Rao Sindia, setting before him the reasons which the British government had to consider his present menacing position an indication of designs, which would render it necessary to act against him as an enemy, unless he withdrew his army across the Nerbudda; but making at the same time the correspondent offer, that, as soon as the Mahratta chiefs should lead back their armies to their usual stations, he would also withdraw from its advanced position the British army under his command.

A conference on the subject of this letter took place between the chieftains on the 21st of July. To a note, the next day addressed by the Resident to Dowlut Rao Sindia, requesting an answer to the letter of General Wellesley, no reply was returned. The Resident received the General's instructions to urge them once more on the separation of their armies; and received an appointment for a conference with Sindia on the 25th. On this occasion he was

[1] Narrative, ut supra, p. 324.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1803.

told, "that the forces of Sindia and the Raja of Berar were encamped on their own territories; that those chieftains had solemnly promised not to ascend the Adjuntee pass, nor to march to Poonah; that they had already given to the Governor-General assurances in writing, that they never would attempt to subvert the treaty of Bassein, which assurances were unequivocal proofs of their amicable intentions; lastly, that the treaty at that time under negotiation between Sindia and Holkar was not completely settled; and that until it should be finally concluded, Dowlut Rao Sindia could not return to Hindustan." The Resident remarked, that, as the actual position of the Mahratta armies could afford no advantage to their respective sovereigns, unless in the event of a war with the British power, the British government could not conclude that the determination of these sovereigns to keep their armies in such a position was for any other than a hostile purpose; and that, for the negotiation with Holkar, Boorhanpore was a much more convenient situation than the frontier, so much more distant, of the British ally. After much discussion, the 28th was named, as the day on which the Resident should receive a decisive reply. The 28th was afterwards shifted to the 29th; the Resident threatening to depart, and making vehement remonstrance against so many delays. The interview on the 29th was not more availing than those which preceded. The Resident sent forward his tents on the 30th, intending to begin his march on the 31st, and refused to attend a conference to which he was invited with Sindia and the Raja of Berar. As he was prevented, however, from setting out on the 31st,

by the heaviness of the rain, he complied with a request from both chieftains to meet them on the evening of that day at the tents of the Raja of Berar.

After the usual topics were once more gone over, the Mahratta chieftains offered the following proposition: that the forces of the Raja and of Sindia should, in conjunction, retire to Boorhanpore; while the British General should withdraw his troops to their usual stations. As these respective movements would leave to the Mahratta chieftains nearly all their present power of injuring the British state, while they would deprive the British government of the security afforded by the present position of its troops, the Resident assured them that a proposition to this effect could not be received.

The Princes made a second proposal: That the Resident should fix a day, on which both the Mahratta and the British armies should begin to withdraw to their respective stations. Beside that the Resident had no power to engage for the movements of the British army, he plainly gave the Princes to understand, that their promise about withdrawing their armies was not sufficient security for the performance.

They lastly offered to refer it to General Wellesley, to name a day on which the British troops, and theirs, should begin their march; to name also the time at which he thought the British troops might reach their usual stations, when they too would so regulate their marches as to arrive at their usual stations at the same precise period of time. If this proposition was rejected, they said they could not retire without an injury to the honour and dignity of their respective governments.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1803.

The Resident consented to postpone his departure, till time was given for referring the last proposition to General Wellesley; but required, as a condition, that the letters to that effect should be with him for transmission before noon of the following day. The letters came; submitting for decision, however, not the last, but the first, of the three propositions which had been previously discussed. Observing this coarse attempt at more evasion and delay, that officer made immediate arrangements for quitting the camp of Dowlut Rao Sindia, and commenced his march towards Aurungabad on the 3rd of August.[1]

Aware of the great unpopularity in England to which wars in India, except wars against Tippoo Saheb, were exposed; aware also of the vast load of debt which his administration had heaped upon the government of India, a load which a new and extensive war must greatly augment, the Governor-General has, in various documents, presented a laboured argument to prove, that the appeal to arms now made by the British government was forced, and altogether unavoidable.[2] It may be requisite, as far as it can be done with the due restriction in point of space, to show how far his arguments are supported by the facts.

When Dowlut Rao Sindia and the Raja of Berar

[1] Governor-General's Narrative, Ibid. p. 327—331; Notes relative to the late Transactions in the Mahratta Empire, Ibid. p. 226—230; Letter from Governor-General in Council to the home authorities, dated 25th of September, 1803, Ibid. p. 170—176.—M. See also Dispatches, iii. 159, 170, 236.—W.

[2] In his Narrative, ut supra, p. 331; Notes, ut supra, p. 230; Dispatch of the 25th of September, 1803, ut supra, p. 176.—M. Dispatches, iii. 330.—W.

united their armies, under circumstances so warlike, and in a position so threatening, as those of the union which took place on the borders of Nizam Ali's dominions in 1803; and when the English, should they begin to act in the rainy season, would enjoy important advantages, of which, if they left the enemy to begin operations in the dry season, they would be deprived, it will hardly be denied that the English had good reasons for commencing hostilities, if no other expedient could be devised to procure the dispersion of those armies, the position of which created that danger, which it was the professed object of the war to avert.

Still, however, two questions will remain, both of which must be clearly and decisively answered in the negative, to make good the Governor-General's defence. In the first place, allowing the necessity of war in August, 1803, to have been ever so imperative, was it, or was it not, a necessity of that Governor's own creating, a necessity of whose existence he alone was the author, and for which it is just that he should be held responsible? In the next place, were the objects, on account of which this necessity was created, equal in value to the cost of a war? In the last place, was it true, that the alleged necessity existed, and that no expedient but that of war could avert the danger which the new position of the two Mahratta chieftains appeared to involve.

The answer to the first of these questions will not require many words. The necessity, whatever it was, which existed for war at the time when hostilities commenced, was undoubtedly created by the Governor-General himself. The proof is so obvious, that

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1803.

hardly does it require to be stated in words. That necessity was created by the treaty of Bassein; and the treaty of Bassein was the work of the Governor-General. The Governor-General had no apprehension of war, either on the part of Sindia, or of the Raja of Berar, previous to the treaty of Bassein, as is proved by all his words and all his actions. If we are to believe his solemn declarations, he had little apprehension of it, even after the treaty of Bassein, nay till six weeks before the declaration of war.

For believing that, but for the treaty of Bassein, war, either on the part of Sindia, or of the Raja of Berar, was in no degree to be apprehended by the British government, the current of the history, the circumstances and character of those Princes, and even the succeeding results, prove that he had sufficient and superabundant reasons. Undoubtedly those reasons must have been strong, when they sufficed to convince the Governor-General, even after these Princes had received all the alarm and provocation which the treaty of Bassein was calculated to produce, that they would yet be deterred from any resistance to the operation of that treaty, by the awful chances of a conflict with the British power. The weakness of which these Princes were conscious, as compared with the British state, was the first solid ground of the Governor-General's confidence. The extremely indolent and pacific character of the Raja of Berar was another. Unless in confederacy with the Raja of Berar, it was not to be apprehended that Sindia would venture upon a war with the British government; and scarcely any thing less rousing to

his feelings than the treaty of Bassein would have induced that unwarlike Prince to form a confederacy with Sindia, in defiance of the British power. As for Holkar, it was the weakness of Sindia which made him any thing; and the united force of both, if, without the treaty of Bassein, it would have been possible to unite them, would have constituted a feeble source of danger to the British state.

The treaty of Bassein, therefore, as it was the cause assigned, by these Princes themselves, for their union, and the warlike attitude they had assumed, so it will hardly admit of dispute that it was the real cause. The Governor-General himself, when he came at last to the endeavour of making out as strong a case as possible for the necessity of drawing the sword, exhibits reasons which operated both on Sindia and the Raja of Berar, for going to war on account of the treaty of Bassein, reasons which, to men of their minds, he seems to represent as little less than irresistible. "The conduct," says he, "of Dowlut Rao Sindia towards the Peshwa, during a long course of time antecedent to the Peshwa's degradation from the musnud of Poonah, and the views which that chieftain, and the Raja of Berar are known to have entertained with respect to the supreme authority of the Mahratta state, afford the means of forming a correct judgment of the motives which may have rendered those chieftains desirous of subverting the treaty of Bassein." Of these views he then exhibits the following sketch. "The whole course," says he, "of Dowlut Rao Sindia's proceedings, since his accession to the dominions of Madajee Sindia, has manifested a systematic design of esta-

BOOK VI CHAP. II.

1803.

blishing an ascendency in the Mahratta state upon the ruins of the Peshwa's authority." After adducing a number of facts in proof of this proposition, he draws the following conclusion: "The actual re-establishment of the Peshwa in the government of Poonah, under the exclusive protection of the British power, and the conclusion of engagements calculated to secure to his Highness the due exercise of his authority on a permanent foundation, deprived Dowlut Rao Sindia of every hope of accomplishing the objects of his ambition, so long as that alliance should be successfully maintained. This statement of facts sufficiently explains the anxiety of Dowlut Rao Sindia to effect the subversion of the treaty of Bassein, and his prosecution of hostile designs against the British government."[1] "The motives which must be supposed to have influenced the Raja of Berar, in combining his power with that of Dowlut Rao Sindia for the subversion of the alliance concluded between the British government and the Peshwa, were manifestly similar to those which actuated the conduct of Dowlut Rao Sindia. The Raja of Berar has always maintained pretensions to the supreme ministerial authority in the Mahratta empire, founded on his affinity to the reigning Raja of Sattarah. Convinced that the permanency of the defensive alliance, concluded between the British government

[1] In transcribing these words I have left out three expressions, two of vague reprobation which the Governor-General bestows upon the actions of Sindia, and one of applause which he bestows upon his own, because they have only a tendency to substitute the opinion of the Governor-General upon these points, to the opinion which the pure facts may suggest; and I have so altered another of the expressions as to render it grammatical.

and the Peshwa, would preclude all future opportunity of accomplishing the object of his ambition, the Raja of Berar appears to have been equally concerned with Dowlut Rao Sindia in the subversion of that alliance."

The Governor-General subjoins a reflection, actually founded upon the improbability there was of a union between those Princes, till the treaty of Bassein gave them so extraordinary a motive. "Although the views ascribed to those chieftains," says he, "were manifestly incompatible with the accomplishment of their respective designs; the removal of an obstacle which would effectually preclude the success of either chieftain, in obtaining an ascendency at Poonah, constituted an object of common interest to both."

The Governor-General then states his conjecture of the mode in which the treaty of Bassein induced them to reconcile their conflicting interests. "It appears," he says, "to be chiefly probable, that those chieftains, sensible that the combination of their power afforded the only prospect of subverting the alliance concluded between the British government and the Peshwa, agreed to compromise their respective and contradictory projects, by an arrangement for the partition of the whole power and dominion of the Mahratta state."[1]

The circumstances on which these conclusions are founded were all as much known to the Governor-General before, as after he concluded the treaty of Bassein. He was, therefore, exceedingly to blame,

[1] See Governor-General's Letter, ut supra, p. 179, 180; Narrative, ut supra, p. 331, 332.

BOOK VI. CHAP. 11.

1803.

if he formed that agreement, without an expectation, approaching to a full assurance, that a war with the power of Sindia and the Raja of Berar, if not also (as might have been expected) with that of Holkar combined, would be a part of the price which the British state would have to pay for the advantages, real or supposed, of the treaty of Bassein.[1] The

[1] It is admitted in a preceding page, that, acccording to the Governor-General's solemn declarations, he had little apprehension of war, even till a few weeks before the declaration of it: he had therefore no expectation, approaching to a full assurance, that hostilities would be the consequences of the treaty of Bassein. Then, says our author, "he was exceedingly to blame; because the circumstances on which he accounted for the eventual occurrence of the war must have been known to him as well before, as after he concluded the treaty of Bassein." It is one thing, however, to discover motives for actual conduct, and another to anticipate their existence: it is also far from a necessary conclusion, even when motives may be suspected, that they will be followed by acts, especially when it is obvious that other motives, equally or still more cogent, must exist, by which the former may be neutralized, and that the acts are so obviously impolitic as to render it probable that they will not be perpetrated. That the interference of the British, in behalf of the Peshwa, might be distasteful to the principal Mahratta chiefs, may have been little doubted, but it could scarcely have been deemed of sufficient intensity to instigate actual hostilities, particularly when such a result was incompatible with all rational policy. It was thought likely that Sindia would know his strength better than to hazard a contest with the British government; that the Raja of Berar, beside his inactive temperament, had interests opposed to those of Sindia, which rendered their union improbable; and that, even should it take place, and Holkar be joined with them, the confederates would still be too doubtful of their strength to risk the encounter. That these Mahratta chiefs had no real grievance to complain of, that the treaty of Bassein encroached not on their territories or their legal authority, and that whatever obstacle the English alliance might oppose to their unjustifiable pretensions, the cost and danger of removing it by an appeal to arms, would be so much more than equivalent to any possible advantages to be attained, were reasons authorizing the conclusion that the absurdity of hostile collision would be too obvious to the understanding of princes, not devoid of political sagacity or knowledge, to permit of their adopting such a line of policy. The Governor-General was mistaken in supposing that the Mahratta princes attached due weight to these considerations, but they were sufficiently palpable to justify him in believing that they would not have been disregarded, and that they would have formed a counterpoise to feelings

question, then, or at least one of the questions, to which he should have applied the full force of a sound reflection, equally free from oversight or prepossession, was, whether the benefits, which could reasonably be expected from the treaty of Bassein, were a full compensation for the evils ready to spring from the wars to which it was likely to give birth: on the contrary, if he allowed his mind to repel from itself, as far as possible, all expectation of the expensive and bloody consequences likely to issue from the treaty; and, fixing his attention almost exclusively upon the advantages painted in his imagination, decided, upon what may be regarded as a hearing of only one side, that the treaty ought, if possible, to be made, he pursued a course which, in the management of public affairs, is indeed most lamentably common, but which on that account only deserves so much the more to be pointed out to the disapprobation of mankind.

The discussion of a question like this requires the use of so many words, because it imports a reference to so many particulars, that it would produce an interruption incompatible with the due continuity of a narrative discourse. It may, notwithstanding, have its use to point out merely the paths of inquiry.

To them, on whom, in this instance, peace or war depended, it belonged to ask themselves, whether the act of grasping at a new set of advantages, in

of personal mortification and disappointment sufficient to have prevented the actual occurrence of war. He was not, therefore, exceedingly to blame in entertaining expectations, approaching to full assurance, that the treaty of Bassein would not be followed by hostilities.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1803.

relation to other states, which act it is pretty certain that those states, or some of them, will hostilely resent, does not constitute the war, a war of aggression, on the part of the state which wilfully performs the act out of which it foresees that war will arise. A war, which is truly and indisputably defensive, is a war undertaken in defence, that is, to prevent the loss, of existing advantages. And though a state may justly assert its right to aim at new advantages, yet if it aims at advantages, which it cannot attain without producing a loss of existing advantages to some other state, a loss which that state endeavours to prevent with a war, the war on the part of the latter state is truly a defensive, on the part of the other is truly an aggressive, and, in almost all cases, an unjust war.

The Governor-General is so far from denying that the treaty of Bassein did import the loss of advantages to Sindia, that we have just heard him enumerating the advantages of which it deprived that Mahratta chief; advantages on which it was natural for him to place the highest possible value; the power, as he imagined, of establishing his controlling influence over the Peshwa, and, through him, over the whole or the greater part of the Mahratta states.

Many times is the answer of the Governor-General repeated in the documents which he has liberally supplied. These advantages, he cries, on the part of Sindia, existed only for purposes of injustice; his complaints are, therefore, to be treated with indignation.

The man who carefully visits the sources of Indian history is often called to observe, and to observe with astonishment, what power the human mind has in deluding itself; and what sort of things a man can pass upon himself for conclusive reasoning, when those against whom his reasoning operates are sure not to be heard, and when he is equally sure that those to whom his discourse is addressed, and whom he is concerned to satisfy, have all the requisites for embracing delusion; to wit, ignorance, negligence, and, in regard to the particulars in question, a supposition, at the least, of concurring, not diverging interests.

It is truly surprising, that the object, which is marked by the Governor-General as the most profligate ambition, and the most odious injustice, cruelty, and oppression, in Dowlut Rao Sindia, to aim at, is the same object, exactly, at which he himself was aiming, with so uncommon a degree of ardour and perseverance, and at the expense of so many sacrifices. The object, incontestably, at which both were aiming, was, an all-controlling influence over the Peshwa, and through him, as far as possible, over the other Mahratta governments. As far then as concerned the object of pursuit, the coincidence is complete, manifest, and indubitable, between the ambition of Sindia, and the ambition of the Governor-General. Wherein, then, did the ambition of these two leaders differ, so as to entitle the Governor-General to cover the ambition of Sindia with the epithets most expressive of the disapprobation and abhorrence of mankind, his own with epithets the most expressive of their approba-

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

tion and favour? One mighty difference there was; that the one was the Governor-General's own ambition, the other that of another man; and a man the gratification of whose ambition in this instance was incompatible with the gratification of his. Another difference, which would be felt where it was desirable for the Governor-General that it should be felt, was, that the benefits, which were said to be great, arising from the accomplishment of this object of the Governor-General's ambition, were to be English benefits. From the accomplishment of the same object of Sindia's ambition would arise nothing but the prevention of these English benefits. Under this mode of viewing the question, however, it cannot be disguised, that Sindia would have the same grounds exactly for applying epithets of applause to his own ambition, and of abuse to that of the Governor-General.[1]

But differences, such as these, are more frequently the grounds of action in human affairs, than acknowledged, or even known, to be so; since nothing is

[1] There is one important difference in the relations in which the English and Sindia stood to the Peshwa, which is wholly overlooked in this argument; the different mode in which they prosecuted the objects of their, be it admitted, equal ambition. The English acted with the professed acquiescence of the Peshwa; Sindia notoriously in his despite. The English placed the Peshwa on his throne, and kept him there, and allowed him the independent enjoyment of extensive authority; Sindia occupied Poonah with an almost hostile force; compelled the Peshwa to submit entirely to his will, and was yet unable to protect him against his enemies. The English did not march to Poonah to hold the Peshwa in subjection; the Peshwa fled to them, and was glad to resume his principality under the shadow of their banners. Admitting, then, that the establishment of British control at Poonah was the result of the Governor-General's ambition, that ambition differed from Sindia's in seeking to effect its objects by gentle, not by violent means; with the concurrence, not in defiance of those over whom it aspired to rule.—W.

more easy for the greater part of men, than to be ignorant of the motives by which they are actuated, and, while absorbed in the pursuits of the most vulgar and selfish ambition, to be giving themselves credit for the highest virtue, before the tribunal of their own consciences. What then will be said? That of this controlling power, at which Sindia and the English both of them aimed, Sindia would make a bad use, the English a good one? If one ruler has a title to make at his pleasure this assumption in his own favour, so has every other ruler; and a justification is afforded to the strong, who are always in the right, for extending, as far as they please, their oppressions over the weak.

If we should allow, that the English government would make a better use of new power than a native one, as it would be disgraceful to think it would not, the reason would go further than the Governor-General would wish; for upon this reason not one native government should be left existing in India.

But beside this; what is it that we are precisely to understand by a better use; Is it a use better for the English? Or a use better for the English and Mahrattas both? This latter assertion is the only one which it would answer any purpose to make; meaning, in both cases, the people at large, not the handful of individuals composing the government, whose interests are worth no more than those of any other equally minute portion of the common mass.

That the use of it, on the part of the English would be good even for themselves, was so far from being a decided point, that all connexions of the

BOOK VI. CHAP. 11.

1803.

same description stood condemned, and forbidden, by a memorable clause of that very act of parliament, on which the government of the East India Company rested, and of which, by consequence, the treaty of Bassein was a flagrant violation. By how many of the Court of Directors, not to speak of other classes of men, it was condemned as injurious to British interests, we shall afterwards have occasion to observe.[1]

But whatever the effects in regard to the English, unless it appear that the control over the Peshwa and the Mahratta states, which was equally the object of ambition to Sindia and the Governor-General, would have been attended with worse consequences to the Mahrattas, if in the hands of Sindia, than if in the hands of the English, it will be diffi-

[1] The condemnation of the principle of the extension of the British power in India by the Court of Directors, and by the Parliament, was much too philosophical to be of any practical applicability to the mingled character of human occurrences. It might have had some credit for benevolence, if there was not reason to believe that it was prompted, in some degree, by party and personal feeling. It is not entitled to commendation for foresight, as events have shown it to be idle: and it deserves not the character of wisdom, for it was irreconcileable with the whole position of the English in India. The very foundation of a political power involved the consequence of extension: an empire, once planted in India, must either have been soon rooted up, or it must have continued to grow. The sagacity of Clive foresaw the necessity, and he had told the public that it was impossible to stop. We were in a situation in which we must either go forward or backwards; our whole progress was one of aggression, and it is much less easy to defend our being in India as a political power at all, than to justify our engrossing all the political power of the country. Once there, as rulers and princes, it was for the honour and profit of Great Britain that we should be paramount. It is not necessary here to advocate the extension of British power as conducive to the benefit of India. What statesman or historian will venture now to affirm that the extension of the British Indian empire has not been advantageous to Great Britain. Every step of advance made in India has opened new fields to British industry; has added largely to British capital; has augmented our population and wealth, and has extended the resources, whilst it has elevated the reputation of the ruling state.—W.

cult to show in what respect the ambition of Sindia was selfish and wicked; that of the English full of magnanimity and virtue. In what respects then were the people of the Mahratta states to be the better for the control of the English? Not as regarded oppression at the hands of their several and respective governments; for, in regard to the treatment which those governments might yield to their subjects, the English were ready to bind themselves not to interfere; and we have seen, in the case of the Nabobs of the Carnatic and Oude, that the motives to misrule in the native governments, upheld by British power, were not diminished; but increased an hundred fold.

The grand benefit held out by the Governor-General is, that the Mahrattas would be withheld from war. But this, if foreign war is meant, the Mahrattas had always regarded, and except in a few instances, had always found, a source of benefit, rather than harm. If internal wars are meant, these, it is plain, would be as effectually prevented, if the control of Sindia, as if that of the English, became complete over all the Mahratta states:[1]

[1] The benefits of British supremacy, as far as the people of any Indian state are affected, is a very different question from the advantages to Great Britain. The results are of a more mingled nature; many are evil, but the good, perhaps, predominate, at least we would wish to hope so. In this particular instance, however, the argument confined to the suppression of internal war amongst the Mahrattas is easily answered, as it turns upon an impossible condition. If the control of Sindia became as complete over the Mahratta states as that of the English, internal wars would be as effectually prevented. That Sindia could not acquire such control was clear, he had tried it and failed; he had been baffled by a rival who commenced his career with seven horsemen. Holkar, at one time little better than a petty freebooter, had driven Sindia and the Peshwa from Poonah; what guarantee of internal tranquillity could the power of Sindia afford?—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. II. 1803.

And Sindia, had he been as skilful a rhetorician as the English rulers, would, as gairishly as they, have described the preventing of internal war, and the union and tranquillity of the Mahratta powers, as the grand, the patriotic, and virtuous aim of all his thoughts, and all his actions.

But this is not all. Not only did Sindia lose advantages, in respect to a favourite object of ambition, which was exactly the same object, by the gaining of which the English had deprived him of those advantages; but, if he had been the greatest lover of peace and of justice of all the princes upon the face of the earth, he would still have had the greatest reason to resent the formation of the treaty of Bassein, and to resist to the utmost its execution. What is that, on the strength of which we have already seen the Governor-General boasting of the prodigious value of the treaty of Bassein? Not the circumstance of its having made a dependant of the feeble and degraded Peshwa. This in itself was a matter of little importance. The treaty, for receiving the British troops, concluded with one of the chief Mahratta states, was declared to be valuable, because it afforded a controlling power over all the other governments of the Mahratta nation.[1]

[1] The following are some of the Governor-General's expressions: "If the negotiation shall prove successful, there is reason to expect that it will promote the complete accomplishment of the general system of defensive alliance, by inducing the other Mahratta powers to concur in the proposed arrangement—with a view to avoid the dependent and subordinate condition to which they must be reduced by their exclusion from an alliance, of which the operation, with respect to them, must be, to control all ambitious views and aggressive designs on their part, without affording to those powers the benefit of the general guarantee." (Narrative, ut supra, p. 10.)—"The same conveyance will furnish you with a detail of the ne-

And what is meant by a controlling power? The power, undoubtedly, of preventing them from doing whatever the English government should dislike. But the state, which is prevented from doing whatever another state dislikes, is in reality dependent upon that state; and can regard itself in no other light than that of a vassal. If the loss of independence, therefore, is a loss sufficient to summon the most pacific prince in the world to arms, Dowlut Rao Sindia, and the Raja of Berar, had that motive for offering resistance to the treaty of Bassein.

It will not weaken the argument, to say, that the Governor-General was deceived in ascribing these wonderful powers to the treaty of Bassein; because it was not surely unnatural in the Mahratta princes to apprehend that which the Governor-General hoped, and to do what lay in their power to prevent it.

It was idle, too, in the Governor-General, unless for the sake of immediate effect upon the minds of his ministerial and directorial masters, to which it was not ill-adapted, to declare so often, and with so

gotiations, conducted by the Resident at Poonah, under my authority, with the view to the accomplishment of the important object of comprehending the Mahratta states in the general system of defensive alliance with the Honourable Company and its allies, on the basis of the treaty concluded with his Highness the Nizam in the month of October, 1800." (Ibid. 29.)—"The intimate connexion with the Peshwa, on principles calculated to secure to him the constant protection of the British arms, could not be formed, without, at the same time, establishing our ascendency in the Mahratta empire." (Ibid. 34.)—In the next page (35) he calls it "that degree of control and ascendency, which it must be our interest to establish in the Mahratta state, and which it is his object to avoid."—"The Peshwa is aware, that the permanent establishment of a British force in the neighbourhood of Poonah would immediately place him, in some degree, in a state of dependence upon the British power." (Ibid.)

BOOK VI CHAP. II.

1803.

much emphasis, that Sindia himself was unable to show wherein he was injured by the treaty of Bassein, and could not deny that his rights continued unimpaired. What then? Because Sindia and his ministers were far less skilful than the Governor-General in the use of language; had objections to the treaty of Bassein which they did not think it politic to acknowledge; knew not how to separate the objections they might wish, from those they did not wish, to avow; and, agreeably to the rules of Eastern etiquette, which never in general terms condemns, but always approves of, every thing proceeding from the will of a superior, did, in general courtesy, when urged and importuned upon the subject, apply a vague negation of injustice to the treaty of Bassein; does that hinder it from being now clearly seen that the treaty of Bassein had an operation injurious to that prince, an operation which the Governor-General regarded as the great source of all the good which it was expected to produce?[1]

One thing, indeed, is to be considered, that in a great part of all that is said by the Governor-Ge-

[1] The pains taken in the text to show that Sindia had reason to be dissatisfied with the treaty of Bassein are very superfluous. Undoubtedly he had, but he was not the principal party to be consulted. The question at issue was the restoration of the Peshwa, the nominal, and until lately, the actual head of the Mahratta confederacy. As a former ally, a friendly potentate, he had a right to the good offices of the English; he had called for them, and they were granted on conditions unquestionably beneficial to the English, and in intention, at least, beneficial to the Peshwa. It would have been a base abandonment of positive obligations, as well as an improvident rejection of advantages, to have withheld all assistance from the Peshwa, through dread of Sindia's displeasure, or apprehension of his power.—W.

neral, it is pretty distinctly implied that to render the Indian princes dependent upon the British government was not an injury to them, but a benefit. If this were allowed to be true; and if it were possible, in other indulgences, to make up to a prince for the loss of his independence; yet, in such cases, the consent of the prince in question would seem a requisite, even were his subject people, as they usually are, counted for nothing; because, if any ruler, who has the power, may proceed to impose by force this kind of benefit upon any other ruler at his pleasure, this allegation would prove to be neither more nor less than another of the pretexts, under which the weak are always exposed to become the prey of the strong.

In the only objections, which Dowlut Rao Sindia, and the Raja of Berar, explicitly produced to the treaty of Bassein, it must be owned they were not very happy. Sindia observed, that he was guarantee of the treaty which was in force between the British and Poonah governments at the period when the treaty of Bassein was depending. And both princes affirmed, that the Peshwa, as a member of the Mahratta confederacy, ought not to have concluded a treaty but with consent of the leading chiefs of whom the confederacy was composed.

With regard to the first of these pleas, the answer of the Governor-General was conclusive. When a compact is formed between two parties, the office and duty of a guarantee is, to hinder one of the parties from neglecting, while the other fulfils, the obligations which it imposes. He is not vested

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1803.

with a right to hinder them from mutually annulling the obligations, if both of them please. It was not by the dissolution of the treaty of Salbye, nor in his capacity of its guarantee, it was by the formation of the treaty of Bassein, and in his capacity of a sovereign prince, that Sindia was injured, if injured at all.

In the answer of the British ruler to the second of those pleas, there is something which will require rather more of developement. That the Peshwa had a right to conclude the treaty of Bassein, without consulting any of the Mahratta princes, makes a great figure among the arguments of the Governor-General. The idea of a confederacy does not imply that a member shall make no separate engagement, only no separate engagement, which in any respect affects the confederacy. The Governor-General truly affirmed, that there was nothing in the treaty of Bassein, which affected the Mahratta confederacy, that is, directly; though it was not less true, that, indirectly, it dissolved it. The Governor-General calls the other Mahratta princes, as distinct from the Peshwa, "the feudatory chieftains of the empire," though feudality is a sort of bondage which never had existence in any part of the world, but in Europe in the barbarous ages. And under this fiction, he proceeds so far as to say, "it may be a question, whether the Peshwa, acting in the name and under the ostensible sanction of the nominal head of the empire;" (that is, by the right of a gross and violent usurpation, and in the name of a man whom he kept a degraded, wretched, and hope-

less prisoner;) "might not conclude treaties which should be obligatory upon the subordinate chiefs and feudatories, without their concurrence."

The Governor-General proceeds to speak a more rational language, in the words which immediately follow. "But," says he, "it would be absurd to regulate any political question, by the standard of a constitution, which time and events have entirely altered or dissolved. The late Maharaja Sindia and Dowlut Rao Sindia, have uniformly exercised the powers of independent dominion—by making war on the neighbouring states, by concluding engagements with them, and by regulating the whole system of their internal administration — without the participation, or previous consent of the Peshwa, whose supremacy, however, both Maharaja Sindia and Dowlut Rao Sindia have uniformly acknowledged; Dowlut Rao Sindia, therefore, could not—even on the supposed principles of the original constitution—deny the right of the Peshwa to conclude his late engagements with the British government, without impeaching the validity of his own proceedings, and those of his predecessor. Nor could he—according to the more admissible rules, derived from practice and prescription—justly refuse to admit the exercise of these independent rights of dominion, on the part of the Peshwa, which both Sindia and his predecessor assumed, in a state of acknowledged subordination to his Highness's paramount authority."[1]

[1] Governor-General's Narrative, ut supra. Ibid. p. 319: Also the Governor-General's instructions to the Resident with Dowlut Rao Sindia. Ibid. p. 129.

BOOK VI CHAP. II.

1803.

The observation is emphatically just. It is the weakness of pedantry, or the villany of imposture, to affect to "regulate any political question by the standard of a constitution;" when, however the name may remain as it was, the thing is wholly or materially altered. And the inference is conclusive, that, if Sindia and his predecessor had a right to adopt, without reference to the other states, what measures they chose in regard to foreign policy, so had the Peshwa; if it was now unlawful in the Peshwa, it had in them been heretofore unlawful. In his anxiety however to uphold the fiction of a feudal superiority in the Peshwa, the Governor-General uses a language almost contradictory, when he says, both that Sindia and his predecessor had "uniformly exercised the powers of independent dominion," and that they had "uniformly acknowledged the supremacy of the Peshwa:" the uniform exercise of the powers of independent dominion is the negation of all external supremacy. Besides, the word supremacy is a great deal too strong to express the sort of relation which the Peshwa ever bore to the rest of the Mahratta rulers. It imports, as borrowed from European affairs, a combination of ideas, which represents not any thing which ever existed in India; and, if employed as an accurate representation of any thing which ever existed in India, is only calculated to mislead.

It is curious to observe with what assurance the Governor-General makes, and repeats, again and again, the assertion, that "the treaty of Bassein not only offers no injury to the independence of the feudatory Mahratta chiefs; but expressly provides

additional security for it."[1] The treaty was so worded, as not, in its terms, to contradict such an assertion. But what sort of a conduct is this? Does it justify the attempt to pass upon the belief of other men a proposition, if it is true only in sound, how great soever the difference between the sound and the substance?

The only article of the treaty of Bassein, which referred directly to the other states, was the 12th; according to which the Peshwa bound himself to make no war upon other states, and to submit all his differences with them to the English government. And to this it is that the Governor-General in his said declarations refers. But what was this except transferring the power of attempting to subvert the independence of the "feudatory Mahratta chiefs" from the Peshwa whom they did not fear, to the English whom they excessively feared? In this manner it was, that the treaty of Bassein afforded additional security for their independence!

But let us pass from the question, whether the Mahratta chiefs had or had not just reason for resenting the treaty of Bassein: and let us consider the question of English interests naked, and by itself. What benefits to that people was it calculated to yield? And those benefits, were they an equivalent for the evils which, as it did produce them, so it ought to have been expected to produce?

The Governor-General's own opinion of the

[1] For this specimen, see Governor-General's Narrative. Ibid. p. 318: See, too, p. 312. Also his instructions to the Resident, ut supra, p. 129; and the dispatch, 25th September, 1803, commencing Ibid. p. 169.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

good things likely to flow from the treaty of Bassein is adumbrated in a great variety of general phrases, though they are exhibited no where in very distinct enumeration. We shall adduce a specimen of the more remarkable of his forms of expression, and endeavour, with as much precision as possible, to ascertain the particulars at which they point.

"The stipulations of the treaty of Bassein have been framed exclusively with a view to maintain the general tranquillity of India, by preventing the destruction of the Peshwa's power, and by securing his just rights from violence and usurpation."[1]

"The object of Lord Wellesley's policy is to establish a permanent foundation of general tranquillity in India, by securing to every state the free enjoyment of its just rights and independence, and by frustrating every project, calculated to disturb the possessions, or to violate the rights of the established powers of Hindustan, or of the Deccan."[2]

"Every principle of true policy demands, that no effort should be omitted by the British government to establish a permanent foundation of general tranquillity in India, by securing to every state the free enjoyment of its just rights and independence, and by frustrating every project, calculated to disturb the possessions, or to violate the rights, of the established powers of Hindustan, and of the Deccan."[3]

"The conclusion of the treaty of Bassein pro-

[1] Governor-General's Narrative. Ibid. p. 312.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid. p. 303.

mises to establish the British interests in the Mahratta empire, on the most solid and durable foundations; to afford additional security for the permanent tranquillity and prosperity of the British dominions in India, and to effectually exclude the interests and influence of France from the Mahratta empire."[1]

The object of the Governor-General, as he himself is fond of describing it, was, "A system of general defensive alliance between the British power and the several states of Hindustan."[2] This was indeed a great and operose scheme of policy. Equally great, however, were the effects which the Governor-General expected from it; permanent tranquillity, as he thus declares, and justice, over the whole of India.

When the Governor-General, however, after ascribing these grand effects to the consummation of his proposed alliance, not with one, but with all, or most of the leading states of India, proceeds, in the warmth of his mind, to ascribe them all to the single treaty with the Peshwa, we find him practising a very ordinary fallacy, that is, predicating of a part, what ought to have been predicated only of the whole; as if, because the head, limbs, and trunk, constitute a man, it should be affirmed that the human foot is a rational animal.

It cannot bear to be affirmed, in a distinct propo-

[1] Governor-General's Narrative. Ibid. p. 318.

[2] Instructions to Colonel Collins. Ibid. p. 8. See, too, his instructions to the Resident at Poonah, 22nd of November, 1802, where he describes it as a plan "to combine the principal powers of Hindustan in a general system of defensive alliance and guarantee." Ibid. p. 65. See also Governor-General's Narrative. Ibid. p. 307.

BOOK VI CHAP. 11.

1803.

sition, that the mere addition of the inconsiderable power of the Peshwa gave the British government such a commanding and absolute power all over India as every where to secure justice and tranquillity; that is, to compel undeviating obedience to its commands on the part of every government on that continent.

Besides, if it were allowed, for the sake of argument, that such a proposition were capable of being maintained, it followed, that no general system of alliance was required; that an alliance with the Peshwa alone, exclusive of the rest of the Indian princes, accomplished simply all that was proposed to be accomplished, by the immense, and troublesome, and complicated machinery of alliances with all the princes in India. Why, then, did the Governor-General aim at any more?

It is reasonable, however, to suppose, that the Governor-General means, what he so often tells us that he means, namely, that the alliance with the Peshwa was to be considered as about to fulfil the hopes which he held forth, only in so far as it had a tendency to produce other alliances, from the union of which, all taken together, those great effects might be expected to proceed.

But what tendency, then, had the alliance with the Peshwa to produce other alliances of the same description? We have seen, already, in what manner the Governor-General and his agents *supposed*, that it would produce them. They supposed that it would place the British power in a situation to coerce completely the other Mahratta sovereigns; that is, to restrain them from every course of action of which

the British government should disapprove; and that the Mahratta sovereigns, seeing the coercion unavoidable, would choose coercion with the benefit of having the British government bound to defend them, rather than coercion detached from that benefit.

Experience, in a very short time, demonstrated the fallacy of these expectations. The treaty with the Peshwa did not produce an alliance with any other of the Mahratta states whatsoever. It did not produce the tranquillity of all India. It produced one of the most widely extended wars which India had ever seen. If this war reduced the Mahratta princes to the necessity of submitting to the will of the conqueror, it was not the alliance with the Peshwa, but the war, by which that submission was produced; an effect which the same cause might have equally secured, if the treaty of Bassein had never existed. If it be said, that the treaty of Bassein produced the effects which the Governor-General applauds, by producing at any rate the war out of which they flowed; what is this, but to say, that the treaty of Bassein was good, only as creating a pretext for war; and that it was fit and proper to be made, for the mere purpose of creating it? But to perform a public act, with an intention to produce a war, is purposely to be the author of the war, only with a machination contrived to impose a contrary, that is, a wrong belief, upon the world.

The good things derived from the treaty of Bassein, must, then, be regarded as all summed up in these two effects; first, the war with the Mahratta chiefs; and secondly, the means which it contributed to the success of the war. As to the war, if that was

BOOK VI CHAP. II. 1803.

a good thing, it might have been easily produced without the treaty of Bassein. Therefore the treaty of Bassein deserves but little admiration or applause upon that account. As to the other question; namely, in what proportion it contributed to the success of the war, the Governor-General presents an answer on which he appears to lay the greatest stress. The treaty of Bassein was a contrivance to prevent the union of the Mahratta states. It is necessary, therefore, to inquire, how far the truth of this allegation extends.

The treaty of Bassein was calculated to withhold the Peshwa from any confederacy hostile to the English. It was so far from calculated to prevent, that it was calculated to produce, a confederacy, hostile to the English, of all the rest of the Mahratta states.

A very limited question thus remains to be answered; namely, how much the chance of the accession of the Peshwa would add to the dangers arising from the chance of a confederacy, hostile to the English, among the other Mahratta states; and how much would those dangers be lessened, by the certainty of his absence? The item in the account, it is evident, is the power of the Peshwa; and, that being remarkably small, as the danger of a confederacy could not be greatly augmented by its presence, so it could not be greatly diminished by the reverse.

There is, however, a view of the danger, which is drawn by the Governor-General, in very frightful colours. He says, that either Sindia or Holkar must have prevailed in the contest subsisting between them at the time when the treaty of Bassein was framed; that the successful prince, whoever it was,

would have engrossed the power of the Peshwa; would thence have become too powerful to be resisted by any of the other Mahratta princes; would of course have subdued them all; and, uniting under his sceptre the whole power of the Mahratta nation, would have become a dangerous neighbour to the British state. From this danger it was delivered by the treaty of Bassein.

To make of this an argument in favour of the treaty of Bassein, two things must be allowed: it must be allowed that the danger held forth was such as it is represented; and it must be allowed that there was no better method of averting that danger. Both may be disputed. First, it is by no means certain, that the Mahratta state would have assumed a shape more formidable to the English, had the contending princes been left to themselves. It is not even probable. The probability is, that Sindia and Holkar, neither being able to succeed to the extent of his wishes, would have been obliged to compromise their differences; and the Peshwa might have acquired rather more of power and independence, than he had previously enjoyed. But if Sindia prevailed; as the greater power of that chieftain rendered it probable, if any of them prevailed, that he would be the successful contender; in what respect would his power be greater, than it was before Holkar appeared? At that time, he was master of the Peshwa; and yet so little had he increased his strength, that a mere adventurer was able in a few years to raise an army, an army against which he found it difficult to contend. Sindia possessed not talents to bind together the parts of an extensive dominion, as dis-

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1803.

cordant as those of a Mahratta empire; and had he united the Holkar possessions, and even those of the Peshwa, to his own, he would have diminished, rather than increased, his effieient power. Experienee showed that by the attention he was obliged to bestow in holding in obedienee the Peshwa's dominions in the south, his authority beeame little more than nominal, over his own in the north.

It would be tedious to run over all the possible shapes into whieh, if left to themselves, the Mahratta states might then have fallen; but it may safely be affirmed that no shape which they had any chanee to assume would have been so formidable to the English, as that into which they were thrown by the treaty of Bassein.

But if the reality of the danger, whieh the Governor-General thought he foresaw, were as well proved as it appears to stand unsupported by proof, it would still remain to inquire whether it might not have been averted by other and better means, than the treaty of Bassein. Had the mind of the Governor-General not been imperiously guided by his passion for "the system of general defensive allianee between the British power, and the several states of Hindustan," he might have interposed, with so mueh effect, in the eharacter of an arbitrator, as to establish a balance in the Mahratta empire; and a balanee, whieh it would have been easy for the British government to keep perpetually trimmed. He might have so terminated the subsisting disputes, as to make the power of Sindia, of the Peshwa, Holkar, and the Raja of Berar, nearly equal. In the eontests which would of eourse prevail among them, the

British government, by always showing itself disposed to succour the weakest party, might have possessed a pretty complete security for maintaining the Mahratta empire, if there was any use in such a care, in the shape which it had thus been intentionally made to assume. Not only did the power of the British state enable it to interpose with a weight which none of the parties would have been easily induced to resist; but such was in fact the state and disposition of the parties, that they all appealed eagerly to the British government, and most earnestly solicited its interference. The Governor-General, by rushing, with eyes fixed on nothing but the beauties of his "defensive system," to the conclusion of a treaty which gave to the British the government in fact of one member of the Mahratta state, and threatened in a most alarming manner the independence of all the rest, sacrificed the high advantage of acting as a mediator among the Mahratta princes, and created a confederacy which hardly any other combination of circumstances could have produced.

The Governor-General ascribes to the treaty of Bassein only one other advantage, of the importance of which it seems desirable that an estimate should be made; namely, the destruction of the French influence in the Mahratta state. In the first place, it was not the treaty of Bassein by which that destruction was produced; it was the war with Sindia; and a war with Sindia, if it had been worth a war, would have produced it without the treaty of Bassein. But, though what the treaty of Bassein did not produce was the destruction of the French influence, what the treaty of Bassein did produce was the

BOOK VI CHAP. 11. 1803.

union of Sindia with the Raja of Berar, and the necessity, in order to accomplish that destruction, of vanquishing both of those princes together, instead of one.

The Governor-General, as suited his argument, and probably at that time his state of mind, represents the danger from French influence as prodigiously great. Not only does he affirm the power possessed by the French officers in the service of Sindia, to have been highly alarming to the British government; but he holds it out as probable, that some of the contending parties in the Mahratta state would have solicited the aid of the French government, have received a French army from Europe, have prevailed over all its opponents, and so have established a great Mahratta empire, supported and governed by the French. Upon this theory of evil it will probably not be expected that I should bestow many words.

The influence of the French with Sindia was at this time so far from great, that it was completely undermined, and tottering to its fall. So well aware of this was Perron, the officer at the head of the French party, that he had already intimated to the English an intention, which he soon after fulfilled, of withdrawing himself from the Mahratta service. Not only Sindia, but all his chiefs, had become jealous of the French to the highest degree. It was known to the English, that he meditated, and had already begun, a reduction of their power;[1] the English found, at the end of the war, that, instead

[1] Col. Collins's Dispatch. Ibid. p. 17, 18.

of objecting to the condition which they proposed to him, of excluding the French from his service, he was eager to close with it; and there seems little room for doubt, that if the treaty of Bassein had not been concluded, the Governor-General might, if he chose, have made an arrangement with Sindia for discharging the French, without the lamentable expense of war.[1]

But if the condition and influence of the French officers had much more nearly corresponded with the apprehensions of the Governor-General, it is high time that a more sober estimate of the danger, than hitherto they have been accustomed to make, should be suggested to him, and to his countrymen. If the assertion were made, that it would not be in the power of French officers to render Sindia, or any native power, much more formidable than it would be without them, it would not be easy to refute that opinion. What renders the native sovereigns weak, is less the badness of their military officers, than the badness of their governments; and, under such governments, no officers can be very instrumental in the creation of strength. If the commanding officer has not land assigned for the maintenance of his troops, he is always without resources: if he has land, he becomes a civil ruler; and the multiplicity and extreme difficulty of his civil functions leave little of his time for military cares. Besides, he has then an interest in peace; both because his country yields

[1] The Governor-General himself was of this opinion, when he first sent Colonel Collins to the camp of Sindia, with an expectation that he would not only dismiss the French officers, but accept the English subsidiary force; that is, give up his military power entirely to the English.

BOOK VI CHAP. II. 1830.

most when he is most attentive to it, and because his troops are more easily maintained at home than in the field. In the next place, to form a right judgment on this important subject, it is necessary duly to consider how many powerful causes must all be united, all operate in conjunction, to produce an efficient and formidable army. Of these, some of the most important are incapable of existing in the armies officered by Europeans in the service of the native princes of India. Allowing, what never would happen, that the physical requisites of an army were all provided, and bearing in mind that all the efficiency of these requisites depends upon the sort of machine which the officers, considered as an organized body, compose, the reader will easily perceive, that of the causes necessary to render that machine a good one, some of the most important cannot, in the circumstances we are contemplating, ever be found. To give to a body of men, that most peculiar, that highly artificial, and, when contemplated by itself, most extraordinary turn of mind, which is necessary to convert them into an organ of life, of unity, of order, of action, and energy, to the animate and inanimate materials of an army, requires the utmost force of the legal and popular sanctions combined. But neither the legal nor the popular sanction can be made to operate with any considerable force upon Frenchmen, in such a situation as that of officers in the army of an Indian Prince. What is there, in such a situation, to restrain the operation of private views, arising from the love of money, or the love of power, from pique, from jealousy, from envy, from sloth, and the many

thousand causes, which are always producing opposition among men when they are not under the operation of the strongest motives to resist them? Under an European government, it is not the power of the general, which produces that unity of will by which an army is animated. In general, his power would be far from adequate to so extraordinary an effect. The whole power of government, operating with unlimited command over the means both of reward and punishment; the whole force of the popular sanction, holding forth the hatred and contempt, or the love and admiration, of those among whom he is to spend his days, as the portion of every man who conforms, or does not conform, to what is expected of men in his situation, are not only added to the authority of the General, but, so difficult is the effect accounted, that, even when all these forces, operating together, produce it to any considerable degree, the world thinks that it never can express sufficient admiration, never bestow a sufficient portion of applause. Which of these great, and indispensable powers, had any existence in the case of Perron, or any other officer, in a similar case? Upon his officers, it is plain, the popular or moral sanction had no means of operation. What cared they, what should be thought of them by the people of Sindia's court or kingdom, as soon as it was more agreeable for them to be gone than to remain? What cared they for his punishments, when they had it in their power to make their escape from his dominions? A body of officers, in such a situation, is a rope of sand. The General who leads them is their slave; because he can retain

1803.

their service only by pleasing them: he can seldom please one set of them, without displeasing another: and he dares not restrain their excesses; which produce two deplorable effects, the unavoidable loss of discipline, and the hatred, wherever he advances, of the people whom he is unable to protect. The chances, therefore, are innumerable, against the event, that any army, officered as that of Sindia by Frenchmen, should ever become formidable to one officered as that of the British in India.

Of this truth the Governor-General himself appears to have been not altogether unapprized. The evidence is exhibited in the instructions which he issued to the Commander-in-Chief, at the commencement of the war, for holding out to the French officers inducements to abandon the service of Sindia; and in the hopes which he entertained that those invitations would produce their effect.[1] It is exhibited also in the declarations which he makes of the acquiescence with which, in several states of circumstances, he would have beheld the continuance of the French officers in the service of Sindia. Thus, the Governor-General, when he conceived suspicions that the Peshwa, even subsequent to his flight from Poonah, would refuse to execute his engagements for receiving the English mercenary force, declared that he would not attempt compulsion, nor risk a war with a combination of the Mahratta powers, even for the mighty benefits of the treaty of Bassein.[2] Again, when he despaired of inducing Sindia to accede to the terms of his defen-

[1] See papers of Instructions. Ibid. p. 156, &c.
[2] Papers on the Mahratta War, ut supra, p. 68.

sive alliance, he assured him, that the English government would still gladly preserve with him the relations of amity and peace, provided he did not resist the treaty of Bassein, or infringe the rights of any British ally.[1] In other words; had the Peshwa not agreed to put his military power into the hands of the English, the Governor-General would have quietly beheld the whole of the Mahratta states, Sindia's Frenchmen and all, existing in their usual independence and turbulence, rather than incur the evils of a war for the sake of producing a change; and had Sindia not assumed an attitude which implied a determination to resist the treaty of Bassein, the Governor-General would not have made war upon him, in order to effect the destruction of his European force; a war, which, nevertheless, had that destruction been essential to the security of the state which he ruled, it would have been incumbent upon him to make.[2]

[1] Governor-Gencral's letter to Sindia, Ibid. p. 134, also 129,

[2] When the Governor-General, it may be further observed, tells Sindia, that he had not the means of defending himself against the miserable power of Holkar, (Ibid. p. 131, 133,) he surely made very small account of Perron and his battalions. It has been given, in parliament, as the opinion of two men, not apt to agree on disputable ground, of both Hastings and Francis, that European officers; and disciplined battalions, were to the native princes, especially the Mahrattas, a source of weakness, not of strength, who, though formidable by their irregular warfare, could not be so in a pitched battle. See Report of the debate, on the state of affairs in India, 5th of April, 1805. It was affirmed on that occasion by Mr. Francis, that after the minutest investigation, he found there were not more than twelve French officers in the whole Mahratta service. And it is worthy of remark that no specific statement of the number, nothing but large general expressions, is given by the Indian government. Francis, moreover, affirms, that of the force under the command of Perron, the greater part were ordinary Mahratta troops; but a small portion officered by Europeans, or disciplined in the European manner.—M. It is very

BOOK VI
CHAP. 11.

1803.

As to the chance of the arrival of a French army from Europe, a chance which the Governor-General represents as most formidable, how that was diminished by the treaty of Bassein, it is not easy to perceive. If any thing was likely to induce Sindia and the Raja of Berar to seek assistance from an army of Frenchmen, of whom they were jealous only somewhat less than they were of the English, it was the treaty of Bassein. If it be said, that the reduction which was effected of the power of Sindia would have deprived a French army of the assistance to which it might otherwise have looked, it was the war, by which this effect was produced, not the treaty of Bassein. This is another argument which proves that the treaty of Bassein was good, only as furnishing a pretext for the war with Sindia and Berar.

Had Englishmen been capable of forming a sober estimate of the circumstances of France, at that time in a situation very little calculated for sending an army to India, the value attached to this contingency would not have been great. Neither would it be easy to show, that her chances of success, had France conducted an army to India, would not have been fully as great, at the close of the Mahratta war, as before. A prospect of deliverance from the English would probably have roused the whole Mahratta nation, then peculiarly exasperated, to have joined the invaders. As for the loss of Sindia's

certain that Mr. Francis's information was incorrect. Forty officers, British subjects, serving in Perron's brigades, left the service on the breaking out of the war, and were pensioned. There were as many more Frenchmen and foreigners. Sketch of Native Corps, 60.—W.

French officers, it would have been easy to supply their place, and to incorporate with the European battalions as many native troops as their funds could maintain. In regard to pecuniary supply, Sindia could not be less capable of aiding them after the war, than before. He was totally incapable at both times.

The Governor-General not only made a very high estimate of the advantages arising from the treaty of Bassein: he had a contrivance for making a very low estimate of the expense which it produced. It produced indeed a war, which laid upon the East India Company a frightful load of debt. But the contending armies of Sindia and Holkar could not, the Governor-General informs us, have been kept in the field, without ravaging the territories of the English and the Nizam; and to stand protected against this danger, armies must have been placed on the frontiers, which would have cost nearly as much as the war. This is one of those vague assertions, which, without much regard to their foundation, are so often hazarded, when they are required to serve a particular purpose, but which answer that purpose only so long as they are looked at with a distant and a careless eye. In the present case, it may safely be affirmed, that all the expense which a plan of defence required would have been the merest trifle in comparison with the enormous expenditure of the war. That much would have been required for defence, is fully contradicted by the Governor-General himself; who confidently affirmed his belief, that the treaty of Bassein, however alarming and odious to Sindia and Holkar, would

BOOK VI. CHAP. 11.

1803.

yet be unable to move them to hostilities, because they knew their own weakness, and the dreadful consequences of a war with the British power. If for the mighty interests, placed at stake by the treaty of Bassein, it was yet improbable they would dare to provoke the British anger, it was next to a certainty, that they would be careful not to provoke it for the sake of a little plunder.

To have placed the subsidiary force with the Nizam upon his frontier, and to have increased to the necessary extent the troops stationed in Mysore, presented but little demand for expenditure, beyond what the maintenance of that portion of the army would have required in any other station. If some little expense must have attended these movements, it would be absurd to speak of it coolly as fit to be compared with the huge expenditure of the Mahratta war.

We are now then prepared to exhibit, in a few words, the statement of profit and loss by the treaty of Bassein. What was gained by it was, the dependence of the Peshwa, and nothing more: what was lost by it was, all that was lost by the Mahratta war. The loss by the Mahratta war is the excess of what it produced in evil above what it produced in good. Of the good and the evil which was produced by the Mahratta war, nothing can be spoken with precision, till it is known what they are. An account, therefore, of the events, and of the results of the war, will usefully precede the portion which remains of the inquiry into the nature and effects of the treaty of Bassein.

To have fully exposed the fallacy and unfairness of the assertions in the text, it would have been necessary to have followed it almost phrase by phrase, but this would have involved a prolixity equally tedious. In addition to what has preceded, therefore, it will be sufficient to point out a few of the leading exemplifications of want of candour or correctness, as far as they can be extracted from a very discursive and prolonged series of cavils. In professing to discuss the question of English interests, 'naked' as the writer expresses it, secured by the treaty of Bassein, he does little more than strain Lord Wellesley's vague phraseology to conclusions to which it was not intended to lead. "The stipulations of the treaty of Bassein," says Lord Wellesley, "have been framed exclusively to maintain the general tranquillity of India, by preventing the destruction of the Peshwa's power." Therefore, argues the author, Lord Wellesley either mistook a part for the whole, and identified the Peshwa with all the powers of India, or he concluded that the Peshwa's aid was to give the English the power of controlling or coercing all the rest. Now, the Governor-General's object, although he does not always very guardedly express it, is clearly the annunciation of a system, not of a particular case. A system of general defensive alliance between the British power and the several states of Hindustan. The policy and practicability of such a system may require investigation; but it is an unworthy occupation to squabble about words, and for a loose phrase or two to fix upon Lord Wellesley the absurdity of confounding the Peshwa with all the states of Hindustan.

The alliance with the Peshwa did not, it is urged, produce a general defensive alliance—it produced war; therefore a war was the good thing realized for the British by the treaty of Bassein. But war, as has been observed, was not the necessary, it was only a contingent consequence of that treaty, and one regarded as improbable. It was a contingency too, worth risking for the establishment of a controlling authority at Poonah, by which an accession of territory was obtained, means of enlarging our military resources acquired, chance of annoyance from foreign foes obviated, and the dominions of the British and the Nizam placed in a position of improved security and strength. These were solid advantages, and that they were worth fighting for was proved by the result, as they were not only preserved, but were largely extended at the termination of the war. So far, therefore, it may be admitted that the war was not a bad thing, but it was not the proposed nor the necessary consequence of the Treaty of Bassein. That in the war which ensued it was an advantage to have the amity instead of the enmity of the Peshwa, no one but our author could seriously have questioned. That the Mahratta confederacy, concentrated under one powerful head, would have been a dangerous neighbour, is undeniable, although we may admit there was little probability of any such consolidation. And the benefits expected from the pacific mediation of the British power, between the Mahratta states, are controverted by fact and likelihood. What had been the result of a pacific mediation between the Mahrattas and the Nizam? The almost extermination

1803.

of the latter. No interposition but that of force could have been of the slightest efficacy. It may reasonably be doubted if the British Government, by always showing itself disposed to succour the weakest party, would have been less mixed up with Mahratta politics, would have incurred less trouble and cost, would less assuredly have engrossed the whole military control of the country, than by the Governor-General's system of subsidiary alliances.

The apprehension expressed by the Governor-General of the French in the Mahratta service, may have been exaggerated, but the hostilities that followed showed that the danger, although not such as to have authorized a war, of which the sole object should have been its removal, was not imaginary. The force under General Perron was numerous and well organized, and other disciplined brigades, even without their European officers, were far from being insignificant opponents in more than one engagement. Whatever may have been the probability of succours from Europe, it was infinitely diminished by the Treaty of Bassein, which placed the maritime provinces of the Peshwa, and the subordinate chiefs who were faithful to him, under British military control. That aggressions against the territories of the Company and the Nizam would have occurred, is exceedingly probable, and the means of guarding against them might have been less simple than the text supposes; at any rate, it was a contingency against which it was incumbent effectually to provide, and this provision involved a certain expenditure, as well as a precarious state of relations to which it could not be expected that any government of character would long submit.

In conclusion, it is said, that nothing was gained by the treaty of Bassein but the dependence of the Peshwa, and all that was lost by the war was lost by the treaty. It will be seen, that very great advantages were gained by the war: the immediate gain was also much more than the dependence of the Peshwa. An advance was made in the extension of the British power, not only of immense magnitude in itself, but fertile in consequences the most momentous to our dominions in India. As these results were not fully foreseen, they form no part of the merit of those by whom the ground was prepared for them, but they establish a balance of advantage which is fairly to be taken into account in estimating the consequences of the Mahratta war. We may reply confidently, then, to the two questions of our author,—first, that the treaty of Bassein did not create the necessity although it involved the contingency of war; and, secondly, that the advantages realized by the treaty were not only of sufficient value to render the contingency worth hazarding, but they could not have been declined upon the plea of such a contingency, in justice or with honour.

The prospect of the war with Sindia and the Raja of Berar, was contemplated with uneasiness by the authorities in England; and pending instructions from the Select Committee, Lord Castlereagh addressed to the Marquis Wellesley the views which he had been led to entertain, in the form of distinct notes. Although much that is remarked in these notes

is just, yet the conclusion is the recommendation of a line of policy which would have led to the same consequences. It was proposed to modify, not to annul the treaty of Bassein; to retain the lands assigned for the subsidiary force, and to hold that force always disposable for the service of the Peshwa, although not stationed within his dominions, and its employment being discountenanced as much as possible by the Resident. The object of this modification was to avoid the semblance of interfering with the Mahratta confederacy, but the appearance signified little, as long as the interference was real, and the subservience of a British force to the will of the Peshwa was not likely to be an inoperative instrument in his hands. The other Mahratta chiefs would have had as little reason to be satisfied with this plan as with that actually adopted, the modification of which was prevented by the occurrence of hostilities.

Lord Castlereagh's observations were referred by Lord Wellesley to different persons of eminence in India for their opinion, and his printed dispatches contain the remarks of Major General Wellesley upon the document. According to General Wellesley's notions, the policy of a connexion with the Mahrattas, did not arise from the connexion subsisting previously to the conquest of Mysore, between the Company, the Mahrattas, and the Nizam, by the treaty concluded in 1790 at Poonah; but subsequently to the conquest of Mysore, it originated, 1st. in the necessity of preserving the state of the Nizam in independence; 2ndly. in the unjust claims of the Mahratta nation on the Nizam; 3rdly. in the certainty that those claims would be asserted in arms, and that the Nizam must submit, unless he should protect himself by raising an army, to be officered by European adventurers, particularly Frenchmen; 4thly. the necessity of preventing the Nizam from entertaining those adventurers, and of affording him protection at least equal to that which he would have procured for himself, by those means, even at the risk of a war with the whole Mahratta nation. There can be little reasonable doubt that the security of the Nizam, by the protection given him by the British, was looked upon by the Mahrattas as snatching from their grasp a certain victim, and that sooner or later they would attempt to vindicate their pretensions by arms. The prevention of this particular event, was, according to General Wellesley the main object of the views of the Governor-General in proposing a general defensive alliance, and in the difficulties attending a general alliance he sought for that of the Peshwa as dividing and diminishing the Mahratta strength. Another of General Wellesley's arguments in favour of the treaty is, that at the period when it was formed, all the Mahratta forces, Sindia and Holkar included, repeatedly urged the Governor-General to settle the Peshwa's affairs; and whatever may have been the insincerity of the two principal parties, it was proved, by the alacrity with which many of the chiefs of the Deccan joined the English, that they were well pleased to see them afford succour to the Peshwa. "The southern chiefs, who are the principal support of the government of Poonah, had not submitted to Holkar, they were in arms waiting for the arrival of the British troops, and they joined the army when it arrived in their

1803.

neighbourhood." The stipulations of the treaty of Bassein, therefore, were not in opposition to the sentiments professed or entertained by the majority of the Mahratta chiefs. Of the general policy of such alliances General Wellesley remarks, that in the actual state of politics among Asiatic powers, no permanent system could be adopted which would preserve the weak against the strong, and would keep all for any length of time in their relative situations, and the whole in peace, excepting there should be one power which either by the superiority of its strength, its military system, or its resources, should preponderate and be able to protect all. That preponderating power was the Company, and the exercise of its authority in defending the weak against the aggression of the strong, in preventing all unjust wars, in prohibiting in fact all war within India, was a magnanimous and wise policy, which, although not carried into operation without resistance, and not wholly effected upon the principles which influenced Marquis Wellesley, has ultimately succeeded. Some of the more powerful of the aggressors have, in defence of their right to commit aggression, provoked the British power to inflict upon them political extermination, but the greater number of the weaker princes have been rescued from the most grievous and intolerable oppression, the people have been protected from plunder and devastation, and the general condition of India has been changed from a scene of perpetual warfare to a state of universal tranquillity. Wellesley Dispatches, vol. v. Letter from Lord Castlereagh, President of the Board of Control, with paper of observations, 4th March, 1804. p. 302. Major General Wellesley's observations on the preceding document p. 318.

CHAPTER. XII.

Objects to which the Operations of the Army in the North were to be directed.—Objects to which the Operations of the Army in the South were to be directed.—Minor Objects of the War.—General Lake takes the field.—History of the French Force in the Service of Sindia, and of his Possessions in the Doab.—History of the Emperor Shah Aulum continued.—Battle of Allyghur, and Capture of the Fort.—Battle of Delhi, and Surrender of the Emperor to the English.—Agra taken.—Battle of Laswaree.—French Force in the Service of Sindia destroyed, and his Dominions in the Doab transferred to the English.—Operations of the Army under General Wellesley in the South.—Ahmednuggur taken.—Battle of Assye.—Boorhanpore and Asseerghur taken.—Sindia makes an Overture toward Peace.—Battle of Argaum.—Siege and Capture of the Fort of Gawilghur.—Operations in Bundelcund.—In Cuttack.—In Guzerat.—Negotiation with the Raja of Berar.—Treaty concluded.—Negotiation with Sindia.—Treaty concluded.—Engagements with the minor Princes near the Jumna.—Sindia enters into the defensive Alliance.—Governor-General's Account of the Benefit derived from the defensive Alliances, and the Mahratta War.—Investigation of that Account.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

For the war, as soon as it should begin, the Governor-General had prepared a most extensive scheme of operations. To General Lake, the Commander-in Chief, at that time present with the army on the upper frontiers, instructions had been sent on the 28th of June; pointing out, not only the necessity of placing the army under his command, with the utmost expedition, in a state of preparation for the field, but also, though briefly, and in the form of notes, the objects to the attainment of which the operations of that army would immediately be directed. On the subsequent exertions of the Commander-in-Chief, to make ready for action, the Governor-General bestows unqualified praise. "By the indefatigable activity," says he, "zeal, ability, and energy of General Lake (whose personal exertions have surpassed all former example, and have been the main source of the success of the war in that quarter) the army of Bengal, on the north-west frontier of Oude, was placed, towards the close of the month of July, in a state of preparation and equipment favourable to the immediate attack of M. Perron's force, as soon as authentic advices should be received of the commencement of hostilities in the Deccan."[1]

In this part of the extensive field, which the plan of the Governor-General embraced, he gave notice of two military, and two political, objects. The first of the military objects was to conquer the whole of that portion of Sindia's dominions which lay between the Ganges and the Jumna; destroying

[1] Letters, ut supra, p. 154, 231.

completely the French force by which that district was protected; extending the Company's frontier to the Jumna; and including the cities of Delhi and Agra, with a chain of posts, sufficient for protecting the navigation of the river, on the right bank of the Jumna. The second of the military objects was of minor importance; the annexation of Bundelcund to the British dominions.

The political objects were also two. The first, to use the language of the Governor-General, was, "the possession of the nominal authority of the Mogul;" that is to say, the possession of his person, and thereafter the use of his name, to any purpose to which the use of that name might be found advantageous. Together with the city of Delhi, the person of the Mogul had for a series of years been subject to Sindia; more immediately, at that particular moment, to Perron, as the vicegerent of Sindia in that part of his kingdom. The acquisition of the country would, of course, place the Mogul, too, in British hands. The second of the Governor-General's political objects was, an extension of his general scheme of alliance. He desired that the whole of the petty states to the southward and westward of the Jumna, from Jyneghur to Bundelcund, should be united in "an efficient system of alliance" with the British government.[1]

Such were the ends to be pursued in the north; for the accomplishment of which the Commander-in-Chief was vested with the same sort of powers, which had already been conveyed to General Wellesley, for

[1] Governor-General's Letter to the Commander-in-chief, dated 27th of July, 1803. Ibid. p. 156.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

the more secure attainment of those which were aimed at in the south. General Wellesley was expected, with the force under his command, to defeat the confederate army of Sindia and the Raja of Berar; to protect from all danger, in that direction, the dominions of the Company and their allies; and to establish, in their subsidizing form, the governments of the Nizam, the Peshwa, and Gaekwar.

The province of Cuttack separated the Company's dominions in Bengal, from the northern circars. By the conquest of this district, the territory of the English nation in the northern part of India would be united, on the eastern coast, with that in the south, and would extend in one unbroken line from the mountains on the frontier of Tibet to Cape Comorin; the Mahrattas on that side of India would be deprived of all connexion with the sea, and hence with the transmarine enemies of the Anglo-Indian government; a communication not liable to the interruption of the monsoons would be formed between Calcutta and Madras; and an additional portion of the Bengal frontier would be delivered from the chance of Mahratta incursions. The province of Cuttack belonged to the Raja of Berar. Preparations were made for invading it about the time at which the operations of the principal armies should commence.[1]

[1] Whatever difference of opinion may prevail as to the merits of the Marquess Wellesley's public correspondence relative to Mahratta politics before the war, it is impossible to withhold admiration from it after the war had become inevitable. It is a remarkable exhibition of activity and comprehensiveness of mind. All the great objects both of a political and military nature are pointed out with a most perfect knowledge of the situation and circumstances of the different native chiefs, and with a

Sindia possessed the port of Baroach, and a contiguous district on the coast of Guzerat. The government of Bombay was made ready to seize them, as soon as the war should be declared. BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

General Lake took the field with an army of 10,500 men, consisting of about 200 European artillery, three regiments of European, and five of native cavalry, one regiment of European, and eleven battalions of native infantry. Beside this force, about 3500 men were assembled near Allahabad for the invasion of Bundelcund; and about 2000 were collected at Mirzapoor, to cover Benares, and guard the passes of the adjoining mountains.

The army of Sindia, to which General Lake was to be opposed, was under the command of a Frenchman, named Perron, and stated by the Governor-General, on grounds of course a little uncertain, to have consisted of 16,000 or 17,000 infantry, formed and disciplined on the European plan; with a large body of irregular infantry, from fifteen to twenty thousand horse, and a train of artillery, which the Governor-General describes, as both numerous and well appointed.[1]

distinct and full enunciation of the purposes most advantageous to British interests. At the same time he is most liberal in his confidence as to the means by which the objects are to be effected, and most prodigal in his gratitude for their successful accomplishment.—W.

[1] Vide Governor-General's Notes relative to the late transactions in the Mahratta empire. Ibid. p. 235. It is instructive to observe the prevalence of exaggeration: Col. Collins, in his letter from Sindia's camp, dated 7th of April, 1802, says; "Since my arrival at this court, I have obtained more accurate information of the state of the regular infantry in the service of Dowlut Rao Sindia than I heretofore possessed. I believe your Lordship may rely on the correctness of the following statement. General Perron commands four brigades of native infantry, each consisting of ten battalions of sepoys. The complement of a battalion is 716 firelocks, and

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

To understand the nature of the power of Sindia, in this quarter of India, a short history is required, not only of the peculiar composition of his army, but also of the territorial acquisitions which he there retained. Deboigne, though not the first Frenchman who was admitted into the army of Sindia, was the first who obtained any considerable degree of power. Born a Savoyard, of parents respectable, though poor, after having served some time in the army of his own prince, he entered the more splendid service of France, in quality of an ensign in the Irish brigades.[1] In the vicissitudes of his early life, we must content ourselves with effects; the causes very frequently remain unknown. We find him, next, an ensign in a Russian army, serving against the Turks. He was here taken prisoner; carried to Constantinople; and sold as a slave. After the war, being redeemed by his parents, he repaired to St. Petersburg, found means to recommend himself, and was made a lieutenant. He was detached to some Russian post on the Turkish frontier, and had the fortune to command the escort which attended

every corps is commanded by two or three European officers." Ibid. p. 17. By this statement, Perron's infantry amounted to 28,640, more than one-half beyond the estimate of the Governor-General, which yet we may suppose beyond the mark.—M. The author of the account of the Corps in the Service of Native Princes states, that Perron commanded at the breaking out of the war, forty battalions of 700 men each, with a train of 140 pieces of cannon, and 5000 cavalry. General De Boigne's own statement to Colonel Francklin was, that the force which he raised was of three brigades, amounting to 24,000 men, with 130 pieces of cannon. Life of Shah Alem, 192.—W.

[1] This sketch of the history, both of Deboigne and Perron, for which I have been obliged to trust to sources a little uncertain, is given, as exhibiting, which is enough for the present purpose, an idea, correct as to the class of men to which they belonged, rather than, in every minute particular, as to the individuals who are named.

Lord Percy in a progress among the Grecian Islands. In consequence of the impression which he must have made upon that nobleman, and the views which he must have disclosed, Lord Percy furnished him with two letters of recommendation, one to Mr. Hastings, Governor of Bengal, and another to Lord Macartney, Governor of Madras, to whose acquaintance, it is said, he had already been admitted, during the residence of that nobleman as British ambassador at St. Petersburg. It is surmised, that he obtained the consent of the Empress to make a voyage to India, from which he was to return by way of Cashmere, Tartary, and the borders of the Caspian Sea. Be that as it may, he arrived at Madras in the year 1780, and engaged as an ensign in the service of the Nabob of Arcot. In 1782 he repaired to Calcutta, where the letter of Lord Percy procured him a favourable reception from Mr. Hastings. Without disclosing his connexion with the Russian government, he described to that Governor the journey by Cashmere, and the shores of the Caspian, as the object which he now had in view; and was furnished by him with a recommendation to the Nawab of Oude, and the British Resident at Lucknow. It is said, that he was accommodated by the Nawab with a bill of exchange on Cashmere for 6000 rupees, with which, instead of prosecuting his journey, he purchased arms and horses, and entered into the service of the Raja of Jeypoor; that upon intelligence of this proceeding he was ordered down to Lucknow by Mr. Hastings, whom he thought it his interest to obey; that he found the means of exculpating himself in the mind

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803. of that ruler, and was permitted to return to Lucknow; that he now engaged in trade, which he prosecuted with success; that he came to Agra, in 1784, at which time the Rana of Gohud was closely besieged by Madajee Sindia; that he suggested to the Rana a plan for raising the siege, but Sindia intercepted his correspondence, and, impressed with the proof of military talents which it displayed, consulted Mr. Anderson, the British Resident, on the propriety of taking him into his service; that Mr. Anderson, to whom he had letters of recommendation, sent for him, introduced him to Sindia, and procured him the command of two battalions, to be disciplined in the European style. The terror which Sindia found to march before the grape and bayonets of Deboigne's battalions, and the effects which they produced in the battles of Lallsort, Chacksana, and Agra, from 1784 to 1789, made him eager to increase their number to eight, then to sixteen, and afterwards, it is said, to twenty battalions, at which amount they remained. A battalion complete, consisted of 500 muskets, and 200 gunners, with four field-pieces and one howitzer. The military talents of Deboigne, and the efficiency of his troops, were the grand instrument which facilitated, or rather produced, the victories, and enlarged the dominions of Sindia, in the region of the Jumna. In 1792, with eight battalions, he fought the desperate battle of Mairta against a great army of Rattores, a warlike tribe of Rajpoots. In the same year, and with the same force, he defeated, after an obstinate conflict at Patun, the formidable army of Ismael Beg. In 1792, he defeated the

army of Tuckojee Holkar, containing four battalions disciplined and commanded by a Frenchman; and at last made Sindia, without dispute, the most powerful of the native princes in India. Deboigne was a man above six feet high, with giant bones, large features, and piercing eyes; he was active, and laborious to an astonishing degree; understood profoundly the art of bending to his purposes the minds of men; and was popular (because men felt the benefit of his equitable and vigilant administration), though stained with three unpopular vices, jealousy, avarice, and envy.[1]

Perron came into India as a petty officer of a ship, either with Suffrein, or about the time of Suffrein's arrival. Having travelled into the upper provinces, he first received employment in the army of the Rana of Gohud, where he served under the immediate command of an Englishman. After the destruction of the Rana, he joined, in quality of quarter-master-serjeant, a corps commanded by a Frenchman in the service of Sindia. Though he soon raised himself to a higher command, his corps was reduced, upon the return of the army into cantonments; and he was even unsuccessful in an application for employment in the army of the Begum Sumroo. When the brigade of Deboigne began to be formed, the prospects of Perron revived. He received the command of the Boorhanpore battalion; and had an

[1] This account, which savours of exaggeration, is derived from an English gentleman, who served at the same time with Deboigne as an officer in Sindia's army. See Asiat. An. Register for 1805, Characters, p. 22.—M. It was written by Major L. F. Smith, and is added to his Sketch of the History of the Disciplined Regiments in the Service of Native Princes, first published in Calcutta—reprinted in London, 1805.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

opportunity of distinguishing himself in the battle of Patun. He commanded the detachment of Deboigne's army which besieged Ismael Beg in Canoor; and it was to him that Ismael Beg surrendered. To the honour of their European education, Deboigne and Perron resolutely protected their prisoner from the death which Sindia, who had suffered from his prowess, thirsted to inflict upon him; and he remained in the fort of Agra, with a considerable allowance for his subsistence. When the corps of Deboigne became sufficiently numerous to be divided into two brigades, he gave the command of the first to M. Frimont, and that of the second to M. Perron, who, accordingly, upon the death of M. Frimont, became second in command. When the ambition of Sindia to establish a control over the Peshwa carried him to Poonah, it was the brigade of Perron which attended him thither, and formed the principal part of his force. Perron, thus about the person of Dowlut Rao from the moment of his accession, and one of the main instruments of his power, easily succeeded to the whole authority of Deboigne, when, in 1798, that commander withdrew with his fortune to Europe.[1]

M. Deboigne had received a large tract of country, in the region of the Jumna, in assignment for the maintenance of his troops. Not only the territory as well as the army which had devolved upon Perron required his presence upon the departure of De-

[1] These particulars, collected by the well-informed editor of the earliest volumes of the As. An. Reg. (see vol. iii. Charac. p. 39), are confirmed by common history in all the leading and material points.

boigne; but the presumption of the Governors, both of Delhi and of Agra, had so much increased by the long absence of Sindia in the south, that it seemed to be high time to reduce them to obedience. In the month of October, 1798, Perron sent two battalions, commanded by Colonel Sutherland, one of the Englishmen who helped to officer Sindia's regular brigades, with an expectation that the Kelledar would deliver up the fort; but disappointed in that hope, he sent three battalions more, and the place was invested. Though, from a humane regard to the aged Mogul and his family, who were kept as a sort of prisoners in the fort, much caution was used in firing at the place, it was ready for assault in nineteen days, when the Kelledar capitulated and surrendered.[1]

This was the occasion, on which, for the first time, the custody of the Emperor was placed in the hands of a Frenchman. He had now, during ten years, been subject to the power of Sindia, under which he had fallen by the following means.

In 1782, when Mr. Hastings so eagerly made peace with the Mahratta powers, their dominions were bounded, on the north, by that great chain of mountains, which extends in a direction nearly east and west, from Cuttack in the Bay of Bengal to Ajmere, and forms a great boundary between the southern and the northern portions of the Indian continent. This physical barrier against the dangers to which the English dominions in the north of India were exposed, from the vicinity of the

[1] See letters from an officer in Perron's army. Asiat. An. Register, vol. i. Chron. p. 50.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

Mahrattas, was not all. On the western half of this chain of mountains, on its northern side, and immediately bordering upon the Company's frontier, or that of their dependant the Nabob of Oude, were placed, forming another line of defence, a number of small independent states, all jealous of the Mahrattas, and all dreading any extension of their power. The whole of that wide expanse of country, which extends from near Allahabad on the east to the river Sutledge on the west; bounded on the south by the mountainous ridge just mentioned; on the north, as far as Shekoab, by the Jumna; thence by a line passing near Secundra to the Ganges, and by the Ganges to Hurdwar; was, by the policy of Mr. Hastings, left open to the ambition of the Mahrattas. This country contained, among other principalities, the territory of Bundelcund and Narwar; that of Gohud, including Gualior and Bind; and the great provinces of Agra and Delhi, including the Jaat country, and nearly one half of the Doab, subject chiefly to the Emperor Shah Aulum, and a few other Mohammedan chiefs. Sindia was the Mahratta prince, who, from the vicinity of his territories, and from his power, was best situated for availing himself of the offered advantage; and he did not allow the opportunity to escape. Another Mahratta chieftain, indeed, found means to get a partial possession of Bundelcund, while Sindia was engrossed with the business of other acquisitions; but all the rest of that extensive country was wholly appropriated by the latter chieftain.[1]

[1] See Rennel. Asiat. An. for 1804, Miscel. Tracts, p. 77: Hamilton's East Ind. Gazetteer. The policy of letting him take possession of this

Sindia had already made great progress in subduing this region, when, with Ismael Beg, he approached Delhi in 1788. Gholam Kadur, a son of Zabita Khan; who, having from some cause of displeasure been banished from the presence of his father, had received an asylum from Shah Aulum, and growing into his favour, had been created by him Ameer ul Omrah; enjoyed at that time the principal power at Delhi. The Emperor appears to have been desirous of emancipating himself from the dominion of Gholam Kadur, a man of a haughty and ferocious character; and informed him that, having no money to carry on the contest, he regarded resistance as vain. Gholam Kadur himself undertook for resources; only insisting, that, as "the presence of the monarch was half the battle," the Emperor should head the army in the field; and to this the Emperor assenting, commissioned Gholam Kadur to make the requisite preparations for war. Next day, it is said, a letter from the Emperor to Sindia was intercepted, in which the Emperor

country, is thus represented by Lord Wellesley: "The territories of Sindia between the Jumna and the Ganges interrupt the line of our defence in that quarter; and some of his principal posts are introduced into the centre of our dominions; while the possession of Agra, Delhi, and of the western and southern banks of the Jumna, enables him to command nearly the whole line of the western frontier. In the event of any considerable accession to Sindia's power, or in the event of his forming any connexion with France, or with any enemy to the British interests —the actual position of his territories and forces in Hindostan would furnish great advantages to him, in any attack upon the Company's dominions." Governor-General's Instructions to the Commander-in-Chief, dated 27th July, 1803, Ibid. p. 156. As the Governor-General was making out a case, allowance is to be made for exaggeration.—M. There is no exaggeration in the Governor-General's assertion, that the position of Sindia was favourable to an attack upon the British provinces in Upper India, including those recently ceded by the Nawab Vizir.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

exhorted Sindia to use the greatest possible despatch, for the purpose of destroying Gholam Kadur; "for Gholam Kadur," said he "desires me to act contrary to my wishes, and oppose you." Upon this discovery Gholam Kadur, burning for revenge, ordered an attack upon the fort, in which Shah Aulum resided; carried it in a few days; flew to the apartment of the monarch, whom he treated with every species of indignity; and then put out his eyes. After plundering the Emperor and his family, and sparing no expedient, however degrading, to strip the females of all their valuable ornaments, he fled upon the approach of Sindia; who thus became master of the legitimate sovereign of India, and of all the territories which yet owned his sway.[1]

[1] Of this, as of other parts of the Mahratta history in which the English were not immediately concerned, when our knowledge is sufficiently certain in all the points of any material importance; we must, for the minute particulars, be satisfied to know that they cannot be very remote from the truth.—The remaining history of Gholam Kadur is short. He took refuge in Agra, which Sindia besieged—Seeing resistance hopeless, he took advantage of a dark night, stuffed his saddle with the jewels which he had plundered from the family of the Emperor, and with a few followers took his flight towards Persia. On the second night, having fallen from his horse, he gave time to his pursuers to come up, and make him prisoner. Sindia, after exposing him, for some time, first in irons, next in a cage, ordered him to be deprived of his ears, nose, hands, feet, and eyes; in which deplorable condition he was left to expire.—The party who pursued him was commanded by a Frenchman of the name of Lostoneaux. It was under him that Perron is said to have been first admitted into the service of Sindia, when he served as a quarter-master-serjeant. Lostoneaux is said to have got possession of the saddle, which Gholam Kadur is supposed to have stuffed with diamonds. This at least is known, that he soon after contrived to slip away, and returned to Europe. His corps breaking up after his desertion, Perron was in danger of losing employment, till Sindia's General gave him a battalion of his own. Asiat. An. Reg. for 1804, Chron. p. 63.—Also for 1801, Charac. p. 39.—M. The first of these accounts is a very loose and inaccurate statement. The

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

Though the Emperor was allowed by Sindia to remain in the fort of Delhi, with the nominal authority over the city, and a small district around, he was held in a state of poverty, in which not only the decencies, but almost the necessaries of life were denied to him and his family. A Kelledar or Governor was placed in the fort, by whom he was guarded as a prisoner. And Sindia at times had made him set forth his claim, not only to the tribute which the English had covenanted to pay to him for Bengal, which they had so early found a pretext for not paying, and which now, with its interest, amounted to a great sum; but to the wide extended sovereignty which had ceased to be his, only by successful usurpation and rebellion.

As there is no reason to believe that Perron behaved not to Shah Aulum with all the humanity and delicacy, practicable in the circumstances of Perron; so there is reason to believe that the condition of the unhappy monarch was ameliorated after he became subject to that European officer. M. Perron is represented, by all those from whom we receive any accounts of him, except the English rulers, as not only a man of talents, but a man of humanity and moderation.[1]

Mahrattas had been in possession of Delhi before Gholam Kadur's last administration; he had recovered it by surprise, but conscious of his inability to resist the advance of Sindia's general, Rana Khan, resolved to plunder the palace and retire. Shah Alem's inability to comply with the Rohillas' requisitions of treasure, was resented by the most brutal treatment and the loss of his eyes. The ruffian fled to Meerut; not to Agra. See Francklin's Shah Alem.—W.

[1] The English officer, from whose letters, in the Asiat. An. Reg. vol. i. Chron. p. 50, we have the account of the surrender of Delhi to Perron's battalions, says, "The General, from that amiable humanity, which is a

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

By the distance at which Sindia, while engaged in establishing his authority in the south, was kept from his dominions in the north, the administration of the government of his new acquisitions, in the region of the Jumna, fell almost entirely into the hands of Perron, who was present with an army, and had a large portion of it in assignment for the maintenance of his troops. We have the testimony of a most unexceptionable witness, Colonel Collins, both that he made a wise and excellent use of his power; and that the success of his administration had created incurable jealousy and hatred in the breast both of Sindia's nobles, and of Sindia himself. "I have it," says that Resident, in his letter dated 30th of March, 1802, "from good authority, that the Sirdars of this court have frequently remonstrated with the Maharaja, on the subject of the extensive authority vested in General Perron; and I have also been told in confidence, that, whenever the disturbances in this quarter are composed, so

noble trait in his character, endeavoured to avoid recourse to hostile measures, in regard to the old king, the numerous princes, and princesses, who are detained in the fort: and even when the siege was laid, it was with full permission of the king, and every measure adopted to obviate any possible injury to the old monarch and the royal family. Though the troops in the fort, amounting to 600, were debarred from all exterior supplies of provisions, yet General Perron ordered that the royal persons should be amply supplied, and their provisions pass unmolested." The author of a very intelligent letter (dated Oude, November, 1799, on the military state of the north-west part of the Company's frontier; published in the Asiat. An. Register for 1804, Miscel. Tracts, p. 77) says, "General Perron, a French officer of great experience and consummate abilities, both as a statesman and soldier, represents Dowlut Rao Sindia in Hindustan; and is invested with the most full and absolute authority over every department of the government, civil and military.—This power he exercises with great moderation, at the same time with a degree of judgment and energy, that evince very superior talents."

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

far as to admit of Sindia's repairing to Agra, it is the intention of the Maharaja to deprive the General of the command of those fortresses which he now possesses in Hindustan. Nor do I doubt the truth of this information; when I reflect on the general disposition of the Mahrattas; they being, as your Lordship well knows, at all times inclined to suspicion and jealousy; of which I saw strong symptoms, at my audience with the Maharaja on the 27th ultimo. The ministers, who were present at this interview, having put various questions to me respecting the state of Sindia's possessions in the Doab, I purposely spoke of them, as being in the most flourishing condition, ascribing the same to the able management of General Perron, to whom, as your Lordship recollects, they are assigned in *jeydad.* I also noticed the unwearied attention of the General, to improve and strengthen the works of the different fortresses garrisoned by his troops; and mentioned likewise the high estimation in which he was held by all the Rajpoot and Seik Sirdars, who were chiefly guided by his councils and directions."[1] Though we may easily enough suppose in this language a degree of exaggeration, to which the occasion may be supposed to have presented temptation, yet we cannot suppose a gentleman, of an English education, and of a high character, to have made a deliberate statement for which he knew there was no foundation in fact. In his next letter Colonel Collins says, "Such Mahratta Sirdars, as are envious or jealous of the power

[1] Papers relative to the Mahratta war in 1803, ut supra, p. 17.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

of M. Perron, do not scruple to affirm, that he by no means wishes the total ruin of Holkar; since, in this event, the Maharaja would be enabled to repair to Hindostan, and to take upon himself the chief direction of affairs in that quarter. Whether or not Sindia has been influenced by these suggestions, I shall not presume to determine; but I believe it to be an undoubted fact, that General Perron has been given to understand he must relinquish the collections of all the districts which he now possesses in Hindostan, excepting those appertaining to his jeydad, the annual revenues of which are estimated at forty lacs of rupees; at present the General collects nearly eighty lacs."[1] From Futty Ghur, to which, for the purpose of avoiding the unhealthy season, he had returned from Sindia's camp, having by the way paid a visit to Perron at his head-quarters at Cowle, Colonel Collins, on the 24th of June, 1802, wrote again, as follows: "General Perron has been peremptorily directed by Sindia to give up all the Mehals in his possession, not appertaining to his own jeydad. And I understand, from good authority, that the General is highly displeased with the conduct of Sindia's ministers on this occasion; insomuch that he entertains serious intentions of relinquishing his present command in the service of the Maharaja. Indeed, when I was at Cowle, he assured me, that ere long I might expect to see him at Futty Ghur."[2]

[1] Letter to Governor-General, dated Camp, near Ougein, 18th April, 1802. Ibid. p. 18. Compare the statement of 1,35,00,000 in the Governor-General's notes. Ibid. p. 222.

[2] Ibid. p. 24.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

The first object to which General Lake was commanded to direct the operations of the war, was the destruction of the force of General Perron. This force the Governor-General, though he very seriously, not to say violently, dreaded it, yet at the same time, with a very possible inconsistence, so much despised, that he confidently expected the complete annihilation of it, before the end of the rains. "I desire," says he, "that your Excellency will compose the main army, and regulate the strength and operations of the several detachments, in a manner which shall appear to your judgment to afford the most absolute security for the complete destruction of M. Perron's force before the conclusion of the rains."[1]

Not arms alone; other expedients were to be employed. "It would be highly desirable," says the Governor-General, "to detach M. Perron from Sindia's service, by pacific negotiation. M. Perron's inclination certainly is, to dispose of his power to a French purchaser; I should not be surprised if he were to be found ready to enter into terms with your Excellency; provided he could obtain sufficient security for his personal interests.—I empower your Excellency to conclude any agreement for the security of M. Perron's personal interests and property, accompanied by any reasonable remuneration from the British government, which shall induce him to deliver up the whole of his military resources and power, together with his territorial possession, and the person of the Mogul, and of the

[1] Letter to Lord Lake, 27th July, 1803. Ibid. p. 159. Dispatches, iii. 208.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

heir apparent, into your Excellency's hands. The same principle applies generally to M. Perron's European officers. And the proclamations with which I have furnished your Excellency will enable you to avail yourself of the first opportunity of offering propositions to those officers, or to the several corps under M. Perron's command."[1]

On the 7th of August, the General marched from Cawnpore. On the 28th he reached the frontier; and early on the morning of the 29th moved into the Mahratta territories, with a view of attacking a part of M. Perron's army assembled near the fortress of Alighur. The British army reached the enemy's camp about seven o'clock in the morning; and found the whole of his cavalry drawn up on the plain, close to the fort of Alighur. Appearing to be strongly posted, with their right extending to the fort of Alighur, and their front protected by a deep morass, the General resolved to make his attack on their left flank, which had no protection except from two detached villages. The British cavalry were formed into two lines, supported by the line of infantry and guns; but the enemy retired as they advanced, and quitted the field without an engagement. They were estimated at 15,000 strong. As if to show the extreme want of all cohesion, and hence of stability, in the materials of Perron's power, the Commander-in-Chief informs the Governor-General, and the Governor-General with exultation informs his employers; that upon so very trifling an occasion as this, "many of the confederates of M. Perron left

[1] Letter, ut supra. Ibid. p. 161.

him;" and "I learn," says the General, "from all quarters, that most of the enemy's cavalry who opposed us yesterday, have returned to their homes, declaring their inability to oppose the English."[1]

The town of Coel immediately surrendered to the English; but the garrison of Alighur resisted all the motives with which Lake endeavoured to persuade them. After consideration, he deemed it practicable to carry the fort by assault; and this he preferred to the slow operations of a siege. The place was strong, with a broad and deep ditch, a fine glacis, the country levelled for a mile round, and exposed in every direction to the fire of the fort. Lieutenant-Colonel Monson was chosen to lead the attack: and the preparations were completed before the 4th of September. At three o'clock on the morning of that day, the troops moved down to a distance of 600 yards from the sortie. After waiting till half after four, the storming party advanced under cover of a heavy fire from the British batteries erected for the purpose, and arrived within 100 yards of the fort before they were perceived. There was only one passage across the ditch into the fort, by a narrow causeway, where, the enemy having commenced a mine, but omitted a draw-bridge, the British troops were enabled to pass, and assault the body of the place. As soon as Colonel Monson perceived that the garrison had received the alarm, he pushed on with two flank companies of Europeans,

[1] Letter, ut supra. Ibid. p. 267, 268.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

hoping to enter the gate along with the external guard. The gate was found shut; and the ladders were applied. Major Macleod of the 76th regiment, and two grenadiers, began to mount; but so formidable an array of pikemen appeared to receive them, that it would have been vain and foolish to persist. A gun was now required to blow open the gate. Being situated near the angle of a bastion, it was difficult to place a gun in a situation to act upon it. Four or five rounds were fired, before it was blown open; the troops were stopped about twenty minutes; during which they were raked by a destructive fire of grape, wall-pieces, and matchlocks; Colonel Monson was wounded; six officers were killed; and the principal loss in the assault was sustained. A narrow and intricate passage of considerable length, all the way exposed to a heavy cross fire in every direction, led from the first gate to that which opened immediately into the body of the place. To this it was a work of great difficulty to bring up the gun, and when it was brought up, the gate was found too strong to be forced. In this extremity Major Macleod pushed through the wicket with the grenadiers, and ascended the ramparts. After this but little opposition was made. The garrison endeavoured to escape in every direction. Many jumped into the ditch, of whom some were drowned. About 2000 perished. Some surrendered, and were permitted to quit the fort, by the Commander-in-Chief, who was close to the scene of action, to witness an attack which nothing but the persevering bravery of the men permitted to succeed. The English loss was fifty-nine killed,

including six; and 212 wounded, including eleven European officers.[1]

This fort was esteemed an acquisition of great importance; as being the ordinary residence of M. Perron, and the principal place of deposit for his military stores; of which the quantity found by the English, probably because it was inconsiderable, is not specified, in any of the printed documents in which the value of the acquisition is presented to view.

The same day on which Alighur was taken, the Commander found it necessary to send a considerable detachment, to join the officer left at Futty Ghur, charged with a convoy for the army. Five companies of sepoys, with one gun, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Coningham, left at Shekoabad, had been attacked on the 2nd of September, by a body of cavalry, commanded by a Frenchman of the name of Fleury. Though much superior in force, the assailants were repulsed, but returned to the attack on the 4th, when the English capitulated, their ammunition being nearly spent. Before the reinforcements sent by the General arrived, the enemy crossed the Jumna, and disappeared.

On the 5th of September, M. Perron addressed a letter to General Lake, which was received on the 7th. In that letter Perron informed the British Commander, that he had resigned the service of Dowlut Rao Sindia, and requested permission to pass with his family, his effects, and the officers of his suite, through the Company's dominions to Lucknow.

[1] See the Governor-General's Notes, Ibid. p. 217—and the Dispatch of the Commander, p. 268.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

The instructions of the Governor-General, to purchase, if possible, the surrender of the military resources of Perron, have already been mentioned. We are informed by the Governor-General, that "on the 20th of August the Commander-in-Chief received a letter from General Perron, indicating a desire on the part of that officer, to effect an arrangement, which might preclude the necessity of an actual contest between the British forces, and those under the command of General Perron." We learn, on the same occasion, from the same high authority, that some time previously Perron had applied for leave to pass through the Company's territories, as being about to resign the service of Sindia; and had, at the request of the Commander-in-Chief, sent to the English camp a confidential agent, with whom a discussion took place on the 29th of August. All that we further know is, that the agent departed, without effecting any arrangement. The Governor-General tells us, that "he evaded the propositions of the Commander-in-Chief, for the surrender of M. Perron."[1] Perron might have received a large sum of money, had he bargained for his own retirement, and transferred to the English any considerable portion of the military resources with which he was intrusted. Perron retired, without bargaining at all: and, although he had the greatest cause of resentment against his employer, without transferring to his enemies the smallest portion of the resources with which he was intrusted.

The Governor-General informs us, that M. Perron

[1] Letter from Governor-General in Council, 25th Sept. 1803. Ibid. p. 187.

stated two facts, which remarkably confirm what I have already suggested, with regard to the miserable foundation and feeble texture of all such power as his. "M. Perron stated, that his reason for retiring proceeded from his having received intelligence, that his successor had been appointed; and was actually on his way to take possession of his new charge. M. Perron also observed, that the treachery and ingratitude of his European officers convinced him that further resistance to the British arms was useless."[1]

General Lake, who estimated, and knew that the Governor-General estimated, high the value of removing M. Perron, granted him, in a prompt and handsome manner, the indulgences which he requested; and that General proceeded in consequence to Lucknow.

On the same day on which General Lake received the letter of Perron, measures being completed for the possession of Alighur, he began his march for Delhi. On the 9th of September, he reached Secundra; and during the next two days advanced about eighteen miles beyond Soorajepoor, when intelligence was received, that the army which had belonged to Perron, now commanded by another Frenchman, of the name of Louis Bourquin, had crossed the Jumna from Delhi during the night, with a view to meet and repel the British army.

The troops, fatigued with eighteen miles of march, and the heat of the day, reached their ground of encampment (six miles from Delhi) about eleven

[1] Governor-General's Notes. Ibid. p. 248.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

o'clock, and had scarcely pitched their tents, when the outposts were attacked. The General, having reconnoitred, and found the enemy drawn up in order of battle, immediately ordered out the whole line. The position of the enemy was on a rising ground, with swamps on either flank; their front, where alone they could be attacked, was defended by a numerous artillery and a line of intrenchments. The number of the British troops amounted to about four thousand five hundred men. That of the enemy is stated at nineteen thousand. The British infantry were ordered to advance from the right of battalions in open columns of companies; and during this operation, the cavalry were commanded to precede. Advancing two miles in front, they were exposed for one hour to a severe cannonade before they were joined by the infantry; the Commander-in-Chief had his horse shot under him; and a considerable loss was sustained. As the infantry approached, the General ordered the cavalry to fall back, with a view both to cover the advance of the infantry, and if possible to draw the enemy forward from their intrenchments upon the plain. The enemy fell into the snare, believed the movement a retreat, and advanced, shouting, with the whole of their guns. The British cavalry retired, with the utmost steadiness and order, till joined by the infantry, when they opened from the centre, and allowed the infantry to pass to the front. The whole were instantly formed, the infantry in one line, the cavalry in a second, about forty yards in the rear of the right wing. The enemy had halted, on perceiving the British infantry, and began a tremendous

fire of round, grape, and chain shot. The General having placed himself on the right of the line, the men advanced with steadiness, and without taking their muskets from their shoulders, till within a hundred paces of the enemy, who began to pour upon them a shower of grape from the whole of their guns. Orders were given to charge with bayonets. The line fired a volley, and rushed on, with their gallant commander at their head, when the enemy gave way, and fled in every direction. As soon as the troops halted after the charge, the General ordered the line to break into columns of companies, which permitted the cavalry to pass through the intervals with their galloper guns, and complete the victory. The enemy were pursued with slaughter to the banks of the Jumna. This battle, though small in scale, and not very trying, from the resistance of the enemy, affords a high specimen both of the talents of the General, and the discipline and bravery of the men.

The enemy left the whole of their artillery, sixty-eight pieces of ordnance, with a great quantity of ammunition, and two tumbrils containing treasure, on the field. In men, their loss was estimated at three thousand: that of the English, in killed, wounded, and missing, was four hundred and eighty-five. After being seventeen hours under arms, the British army took up fresh ground towards the river, and next morning encamped, opposite to the city of Delhi. As the enemy had evacuated both the city and fort, Shah Aulum sent a message to express his desire of placing himself under the protection of the victors. An intrigue had been opened with him before, and means

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

had been found to convey to him a letter from the Governor-General, promising to him, in case he should find the means, during the present crisis, "of placing himself under the protection of the British government, that every demonstration of respect and attention would be paid towards his Majesty on the part of that government, and that an adequate provision would be made for the support of his Majesty, and of his family and household." To this secret communication a secret answer was received by the Commander-in-Chief on the 29th of August, "expressing," says the Governor-General, "the anxious wish of his Majesty to avail himself of the protection of the British government."[1] On the 14th, the British army began to cross the river. And on the same day, the General Bourquin, who commanded in the late action, and four other French officers, surrendered themselves prisoners to General Lake. On the 16th, he paid his visit to Shah Aulum. The language of the Governor-General, on this occasion, is something more than pompous. "His Excellency, the Commander-in-Chief, had the honour to pay his first visit to his Majesty Shah Aulum on the 16th of September; and to congratulate his Majesty on his emancipation from the control of a French faction who had so long oppressed and degraded him. His Majesty was graciously pleased to direct his eldest

[1] Letter from Governor-General in Council, to the Secret Committee, 12th of April, 1804; Papers relating to the King or Mogul at Delhi, ordered to be printed 12th March, 1805. See also the Message of the King, ibid. p. 9, which, so far from expressing great *anxiety of wish*, exhibits much distrust of the English, complaining of their late conduct, and declaring an apprehension, "lest when they gain possession of the country they may prove forgetful of him."

son, and heir apparent, the Prince Mirza Akbar Shah, to conduct the Commander-in-Chief to his royal presence. The Prince was to have arrived at the Commander-in-Chief's tent at twelve o'clock; but did not reach the British camp until half-past three o'clock, p.m. By the time his Royal Highness had been received, remounted on his elephant, and the whole cavalcade formed, it was half-past four o'clock. The distance being five miles, the Commander-in-Chief did not reach the palace at Delhi until sunset. The crowd in the city was extraordinary; and it was with some difficulty that the cavalcade could make its way to the palace. The courts of the palace were full of people; anxious to witness the deliverance of their sovereign from a state of degradation and bondage. At length the Commander-in-Chief was ushered into the royal presence: and found the unfortunate and venerable Emperor; oppressed by the accumulated calamities of old age, degraded authority, extreme poverty, and loss of sight; seated under a small tattered canopy, the remnant of his royal state, with every external appearance of the misery of his condition."[1]

In another passage the Governor-General speaks of this event, as "delivering the unfortunate and aged Emperor Shah Aulum, and the royal house of Timour, from misery, degradation, and bondage; and rescuing his Imperial Majesty, the Mogul, from the hands of a desperate band of French adventurers."[2]

With regard to the French officers, this is a lan-

[1] Papers relating to the Mahratta War, ut supra, p. 249.
[2] Papers, ut supra, p. 234.

1803.

guage in the highest degree illiberal, if not unjust, and moreover, indecent. It was not they who degraded, if that was a crime, the house of Timour; it is in evidence that they improved the condition of its surviving members; it is not in evidence that they did not improve it as far as that improvement depended upon them. It is manifest, that certain forms of respect, and a less penurious supply of money, was all that could depend upon them. Of these there is no indication that the first were withheld. Of the second, the French had little to bestow. The revenues of Perron's government must, with great difficulty, have met its charges, and he departed at last with no more than the fortune of a private individual. Whatever he afforded to Shah Aulum beyond the allowance prescribed by Sindia, he must have paid out of his own fortune. And had Shah Aulum been supported out of the pocket of any English gentleman, of the Governor-General himself, though doubtless he would have dealt by him kindly, and even generously; yet I may venture to affirm, that his "royal state" would not have exhibited great magnificence.

Besides, who would not imagine, upon hearing this language of the English ruler, that he was about to restore his "Imperial Majesty, Shah Aulum, (whom his subjects were so anxious to see delivered from a state of degradation and bondage,") to his lost authority? to those territories, from which he had been extruded, only by successful usurpation and rebellion, territories, of which the provinces held by the Company formed a material part? or, if he was not to give him any of the

usurped territories which had fallen to the lot of the English, not even that tribute which they had stipulated to pay him, and which they had long withheld; that at any rate he was to bestow upon him those territories, of which Sindia had deprived him, and which the English had just retaken, or were about to retake? Not an atom of this. The English were to restore no territory. Even that which they were now taking from Sindia, and of which by Sindia the Emperor had but lately been robbed, the English were to keep to themselves. The English, therefore, were to hold his "Imperial Majesty" still degraded from all sovereign power; still in bondage; as much as ever. The very words of the Governor-General are, that only so much "regard should be paid to the comfort and convenience of his Majesty and the royal family as was consistent with the due security of their persons," in other words, their imprisonment. Wherein then consisted the difference of his treatment? In this alone, that he would enjoy more of the comforts which in a state of imprisonment money can bestow, and was secure from personal violence.

The lofty description afforded us by the British ruler goes on in the following words; "It is impossible to describe the impression which General Lake's conduct on this interesting occasion has made on the minds of the inhabitants of Delhi, and of all the Mussulmans who have had an opportunity of being made acquainted with the occurrences of the 16th of September, 1803. In the metaphorical language of Asia, the native news-writers who describe this extraordinary scene, have declared that his

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

Majesty Shah Aulum recovered his sight from excess of joy.[1] In addition to many other marks of royal favour and condescension, the Emperor was graciously pleased to confer on General Lake the second title in the Empire, *Sumsam u dowla, ashgar ul mulk, Khan dowran Khan, General Gerard Lake bahadur, futteh jung:* The sword of the state, the hero of the land, the lord of the age, and the victorious in war."[2]

Though mention is made of the surrender of no more than one other French officer, named Doderneque;[3] the letter to the Secret Committee, dated the 31st of October, says, "The Governor-General in Council has the satisfaction to inform your Honourable Committee, that no French officers of any consideration now remain in the service of the confederated Mahratta chieftains."[4] This, then, was a danger, of which, whatever else may justly be said of it, there was little difficulty in getting rid.

Appointing Lieutenant-Colonel Ochterlony to hold the chief command at Delhi, and leaving a garrison

[1] They probably said something not less extravagant, when he passed into the hands of Sindia.

[2] How often, in looking narrowly into the conduct of public affairs, has the friend of humanity occasion to lament the low state in which *political morality* remains! its deplorable state compared even with private morality! How many men would disdain the practice of hypocrisy in private, who, in public life, regard it, even in its grossest shape, as far from importing the same baseness of mind. Notes, ut supra, p. 249.

[3] It is scarcely worth making any remark on this statement, except to show its spirit. The same sentence that mentions M. Dodernceque's (Dudernaigue's) surrender, adds, he was accompanied by a French officer in Sindia's service; our author should therefore have admitted that there were at least 'two' Frenchmen in the Mahratta army. Dispatches, iii. 426.—W.

[4] Notes, ut supra, p. 203.

of one battalion and four companies of native infantry, with a corps of Mewatties, newly raised under the command of Englishmen who had quitted the service of Sindia at the beginning of the war, the Commander-in-Chief began his march to Agra on the 24th of September, and arrived at Muttra on the 2nd of October, where he was joined by the troops from Futtyghur. On the 4th he arrived at Agra; and immediately summoned the garrison, but no answer was returned. He received information, that considerable confusion prevailed within the fort, where all the European officers were placed under confinement.

Finding that approaches could not be made, unless seven battalions were dislodged of the enemy's regular infantry, who, with several guns, were encamped without the fort, and occupied the town of Agra, together with the principal mosque, and some adjacent ravines, General Lake gave directions for attacking the town and the ravines on the 10th, both at the same time, the one with a brigade, the other with three battalions of sepoys. The attack succeeded in both places, though not without a severe conflict; and the troops engaged in the ravines, being carried by their ardour to quit them, and gain the glacis, for the purpose of seizing the enemy's guns, were exposed to a heavy fire of grape and matchlocks from the fort, and suffered proportionally both in officers and men. Another occurrence was, that the defeated battalions agreed afterwards to transfer their services to the British commander, and marched into his camp, to the number of 2500 men, on the 13th of October.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 12.

1803.

On that day the garrison desired a parley; but while a British officer, sent into the fort, was endeavouring to remove their objections to the terms of capitulation, they recommenced firing, and would admit of no further intercourse. The breaching batteries, however, having opened on the morning of the 17th, and threatening a speedy catastrophe, they capitulated in the evening, on terms of safety to their persons and private property.[1]

A force, composed of fifteen regular battalions, sent north by Sindia at the commencement of the campaign, and of two battalions which had joined them from Delhi, after the battle of the 11th of September, still remained. They had occupied a position about thirty miles in the rear of the British army, during the siege of Agra, but without attempting interruption. And they were understood to have in view a march upon Delhi, with the hope of recovering that important post. In quest of this enemy, the British army moved from Agra on the 27th of October. Retarded by the heaviness of the rain, they left the heavy guns and baggage at Futtypore, and on the 30th and 31st, marching twenty miles each day, they encamped on the 31st, a short distance from the ground which the enemy had quitted in the morning The General conceived the design of overtaking them with the cavalry, and giving them, by a slight engagement, interruption till the arrival of the infantry. Marching from 12 o'clock on the night of the 31st, till sunrise the next morning, a distance of twenty-five miles, he came

[1] Notes, ut supra, p. 251.

1803.

up with the enemy, retreating, as he imagined, and in confusion. Eager not to permit their retreat to the hills, and to secure their guns, he resolved, as he himself expresses it, " to try the effect of an attack upon them with the cavalry alone."

The advance of the cavalry was slow, the road having been rendered difficult by the water of a reservoir, the embankment of which the enemy had cut. The British General, having commanded the advanced guard and first brigade, led by Colonel Vandeleur, to march upon the point, where the enemy, who had for some time been covered by the clouds of dust, had been observed in motion, directed the remainder of the cavalry to attack in succession as soon as they could form and come up. When they advanced sufficiently near to perceive the enemy, they found them occupying an advantageous position, with their right upon a rivulet which the British had immediately passed, their left on the village of Laswaree, and their whole front amply provided with artillery. The point, to which the advanced guard and first brigade were directed, was found to be the left of the enemy's new position, which without hesitation they attacked. They forced the line, and penetrated into the village, Colonel Vandeleur having fallen in the charge; but they were exposed to so galling a fire of cannon and musquetry, that it was impossible to form the squadrons for a second attack, and the General was obliged to draw them off. They left, for want of draught cattle, the guns of the enemy which had fallen into their hands; and the other brigades retired from the fire to which they found themselves

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

exposed, without being able to discover the enemy, though they fell in with and carried away a few of their guns. The British infantry, which had left their former ground at three in the morning, arrived on the banks of the rivulet about eleven. After so long a march, some time for refreshment was indispensably required. During this interval a proposal was received from the enemy, offering on certain conditions to surrender their guns. The General, eager to stop the effusion of blood, offered immediately to comply with their terms, and allowed them an hour to come to a final determination. In the mean time, the disposition was made for battle. The whole of the infantry was formed on the left, with a view to attack the right flank of the enemy, which since the morning had been thrown back to some distance, leaving an interval to the rivulet. The British infantry was formed in two columns, the first destined to turn the right flank of the enemy, and assault the village of Mohaulpoor, the second, to support the first. The cavalry was formed into three brigades, of which one was to support the infantry in the attack of the enemy's right, another was detached to the right of the British army, to watch the enemy's left, avail itself of any confusion, and attack them in their retreat; the third composed the reserve, and was formed in the space between the preceding two. The enemy were drawn up in two lines, which had the village of Mohaulpoor between them on the left, and extended beyond it on the right.

The time for parley being expired, the British infantry moved along the bank of the rivulet,

through high grass and broken ground, which afforded cover. The enemy, as soon as the movements of the British columns to turn their flank became visible, threw back their right, forming an acute angle in front with their former position, and rendering it impossible to turn their flanks. As soon as the British columns became exposed to the enemy's cannon, the field-pieces which they had been able to bring up, and the galloper guns attached to the cavalry, formed into four batteries, began also to fire. The cannonade on both sides was very spirited and severe. The King's 76th regiment, which headed the attack, and had often signalized its discipline and courage in India, had arrived, together with a battalion and five companies of native troops, within one hundred paces of the enemy, while the remainder of the column, impeded in its advance, was still at some distance behind. This advanced party were exposed to the enemy's fire; and the men were falling very fast. Thus situated, the General thought it better to advance with them to the attack, than wait till the remainder of the column should be able to form. As soon as they arrived within reach of the enemy's canister shot, a tremendous fire was opened upon them; and their loss was exceedingly severe. The regularity of their advance being disturbed by the severity of the cannonade, the enemy's cavalry were encouraged to charge. The steadiness, however, of "this handful of heroes," as they are justly denominated by their grateful commander, enabled them to repulse the assailants with their fire. They rallied, however, at a little distance, and resumed a

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

menacing posture; when the General ordered an attack by the British cavalry. It was performed, with great gallantry and success, by the 29th regiment of dragoons, whose commander, Major Griffiths, was killed by a cannon-shot immediately before the charge. The infantry at the same time advanced upon the enemy's line, which they broke and routed. The remainder of the first column of British infantry arrived just in time to join in the attack of the enemy's second line, of which the right had been thrown back in the same proportion as that of the first. Major-General Ware, who commanded the right wing of the British army, fell about the same time by a cannon-shot. After a good resistance, and losing all their guns, the enemy were driven back towards a small mosque in the rear of the village, when the three brigades of British cavalry, advancing upon them from their different positions, charged them with great execution. A column of the enemy on the left attempted to go off in good order with a part of the baggage: but were turned by the brigade of horse which had been detached to the right of the British army, and shared the same fate with the rest of their companions. About two thousand of the enemy, seeing it impossible to escape, threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves prisoners, with the baggage and every thing belonging to their camp.

This battle appears to have been gained principally by the admirable discipline and bravery of the 76th regiment. Of the commander, the gallantry was probably more remarkable than the generalship. He was frustrated in two of his plans; in his

1803.

attack with the cavalry in the morning, and in turning the flank of the enemy in the afternoon; and the victory was gained at last by mere dint of hard fighting, to which the general himself set a conspicuous example. He led the charge of the cavalry in the morning; and at the head of the 76th regiment (which he allowed to come up too soon) conducted in person every operation of the day. Two horses were shot under him; and his son, acting as his aid-de-camp, was wounded by his side, in circumstances resembling those of poetic distress. The son had but just persuaded the father to mount his horse, after one of his own had fallen under him, pierced by several shot, when he himself was struck with a ball; and at that instant the father was obliged to lead on the troops, leaving his wounded son upon the field.

With seventeen battalions of infantry, the enemy are supposed to have brought into the action more than four thousand horse. Their guns, in number seventy-two, being all taken, were more precisely known. The English loss amounted to 172 men killed, 652 wounded. Three months only had elapsed since General Lake crossed the Mahratta frontier; and not only the whole of that army which the Governor-General had treated as an object of so much apprehension was destroyed, but the whole of that extensive territory in the region of the Jumna, which the predecessor of Dowlut Rao had so laboriously added to his dominions, was placed in the hands of the English.[1]

[1] Notes, ut supra, p. 251 to 254, 288.—M.

Although the account given of the battle of Laswari, in the official

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

During the time of these exploits, the great division of the English army in the south had been employed in the following manner. The strong fortress of Ahmednuggur, held by Sindia, with its

dispatches, is repeated verbally in the Notes on the Mahratta War, and Major Thorn's Memoir of the War in India, there is some indistinctness in the early part of the narrative, and it is left doubtful by the Dispatch whether the Mahratta army was attacked by the cavalry before its change of position. There can be no doubt, however, that it was so attacked, but without effect, as the new position was taken up without any serious opposition, by noon. The charge then effected by the advance and first brigade was evidently a failure also; although they broke through the first line, it would seem, that they made no impression on the second, and were exposed to so heavy a fire that it was impossible to form the squadrons for a second attack, and the enemy kept their ground. The statement that the other brigades were unable to discover the enemy, although they fell in with and carried away a few of their guns, is somewhat incongruous, and is incorrect. The third brigade was ordered to turn the right flank of the enemy, and failed not to discover and to feel them, although their guns, being concealed by a high grass jungle, became perceptible only when a tremendous shower of grape and double-headed shot poured upon the advancing squadrons. The cavalry, however, it is said, broke through the line, although the guns were chained together, and charged backwards and forwards three times. Here, again, is some want of precision, as it is added that their battalions, which were drawn up behind a deep intrenchment, kept up a galling fire with musquetry, which did great execution. Their line, therefore, was not broken, although it might have been penetrated by the cavalry, who suffered most severely in these fruitless displays of headstrong valour. It is undeniable, therefore, that until the infantry came into action, the Mahrattas had the best of the day; and after they were attacked by the whole of the British force they maintained a stout resistance, and inflicted terrible destruction upon their assailants. It is justly remarked by Major Thorn, that throughout the war, every conflict gave evidence of the improvement made by the natives in military knowledge, through their connexion with the French. On the present occasion the effect of their influence and instruction was fully experienced in the organization of the army of Sindia, which evinced all the characteristics of European arrangement and discipline. It is worthy of remark, too, that these disciplined battalions were in the battle of Laswari left to themselves. It is doubtful if they had any European officers with them; certainly they had none of character. The cavalry, too, although it has been affirmed that the Mahratta chiefs should have looked to that as their national and only effective force, gave no support to the infantry in this engagement. Thorn's Memoir of the Campaign in Hindustan, 219.—W.

1803.

adjoining territory, was the object of the first operations of General Wellesley. He moved from his camp at Walkee on the 8th of August, and, arriving at Ahmednuggur, took the pettah by escalade, on the same day. The English had thirty-three men killed, and eleven wounded. They opened a battery against the fort on the 10th; and on the 11th the Kelledar or Governor offered to negotiate; and on the 12th evacuated the fort, on condition of safety to the persons and private property of the garrison. This acquisition was of some importance; one of the strongest fortresses in India, in good repair, on the frontier of the Nizam, covering Poonah, and a point of support to the future operations in advance.[1]

In taking possession of the districts, of 6,34,000 rupees estimated revenue, dependent on Ahmednuggur, and making arrangements for the security of the fort, the General was occupied for several days, and crossed the Godavery only on the 24th. On the same day Sindia, and the Raja of Berar, having ascended the Adjuntee Ghaut, entered the territory of the Nizam with a large body of horse. On the 29th General Wellesley arrived at Aurungabad, between which place, and the corps under Colonel Stephenson, who had moved to the eastward toward the Badowly Ghaut, the enemy had passed, and had reached Jalnapoor, about forty miles east from Aurungabad.[2] The enemy continued their march in a south-east direction, with a view, as was reported, to cross the Godavery, and march upon Hyderabad.

[1] Notes, ut supra p. 239, 266.—M. Wellington Dispatches, i. 299.—W.
[2] Wellington Dispatches, i. 344.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

To intercept them in this intention, General Wellesley regained the river, and moved eastward along its northern bank. The enemy, however, soon altered their course, and proceeded to the north of Jalnapoor. Colonel Stephenson returned from the eastward on the 1st of September, and on the 2nd attacked and carried the fort of Jalnapoor.[1] After this, he made several attempts to bring the enemy to action, and actually surprised their camp on the night of the 9th of September. They continued their northern movement toward the Adjuntee pass, near which they were joined by a detachment, it is said, of sixteen battalions of Sindia's regular infantry, commanded by two Frenchmen.[2] On the 21st the divisions of the British army were so near, that the two commanders had a conference, and concerted a plan for attacking the enemy jointly on the morning of the 24th. Colonel Stephenson marched by a western route, General Wellesley by the eastern, round the hills between Budnapore and Jalna. On the 23rd General Wellesley received intelligence that Sindiah and the Raja had moved off with their cavalry in the morning; but that the infantry about to follow, were still in camp at the distance of about six miles.

This intelligence, from which the General inferred the intention of the enemy to escape, made him resolve to attack them, without waiting till the following morning for Colonel Stephenson. He found the whole combined army near the village of Assye, encamped on the bank of the Kailna river.

[1] Wellington Dispatches, 355.

[2] They were joined by the brigades of Col. Pohlman, M. Dupont, and Begum Sumroo. Ibid. 386.—W.

1803.

His road brought him first in front of their right; but as it was composed almost entirely of cavalry, and the defeat of the infantry was most likely to be effectual, he resolved to attack the left. Marching round, he crossed the River Kailna, at a ford beyond the enemy's left flank; and formed the infantry in two lines, and the British cavalry as a reserve in a third; leaving the Mahratta and Mysore cavalry on the other side of the Kailna, to hold in check a large body of the enemy's cavalry, which had followed the British army from the right of their own position. As soon as the enemy perceived the intention of the British general to attack their left, they changed the position of their infantry and guns. Another stream, called the Juah, of nearly the same size with the Kailna, flowed in a parallel direction: at a small distance beyond it, the enemy formed a line, having its right on the Kailna, and its left on the Juah. This line and that of the British army faced one another; but the enemy formed a second line on the left of their position, nearly at right angles to their first, extending to the rear along the banks of the Juah. The fire of the enemy's guns performed dreadful execution, as the British army advanced. The British artillery had opened upon the enemy at the distance of 400 yards; but the number of men and bullocks that were disabled soon rendered it impossible to bring on the guns; and as they were found to produce little effect, the General resolved to advance without them. The right of the British line was so thinned by the cannon of the enemy's left, that a body of their cavalry was encouraged to charge it. A body of the

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

British cavalry, however, were prepared to intercept them, and they were repelled with slaughter. The steady advance of the British troops at last overawed the enemy, and they gave way in every direction. The cavalry then broke in, and charged them with the greatest effect. The enemy fled, but the force of the English was too small to render the victory decisive. Some of the enemy's corps went off in good order; and Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell was killed, in charging with the British cavalry a body of infantry, who had again formed, but soon resumed their retreat. Many also of the enemy's guns, which had been left in the rear by the British line as they advanced, were, by a practice common in the native armies of India, turned upon the British by individuals who had thrown themselves as dead upon the ground. The General thought it necessary to take a regiment of European infantry, and one of native cavalry, and proceed in person to stop this fire, which for some time was very severe. His horse in this operation was shot under him. The enemy's cavalry, which had been hovering about during the action, continued for some time near the British line. But at last, the whole of the enemy went off, leaving ninety-eight pieces of cannon, and seven standards, in the hands of the English, with 1200 men, it is said, dead on the field.

It required no ordinary exertion of discipline and courage in the men, to advance with so much steadiness under the carnage of such a fire. The personal courage, too, was abundantly displayed, of the General who led them on. And unless in as far as the wisdom may be questioned, first, of sacrificing so

great a number of men for the only object which could be attained by it; next, of not waiting for the arrival of Stephenson, when the victory would have been attended with much greater, perhaps with decisive effects, the conduct of the action, it is probable, possessed all the merit of which the nature of the case allowed. Of the British army, 428 were killed, 1138 were wounded. As the whole are said to have consisted of only 4500 men, between one third and one half of the whole army were either killed or wounded. This was paying very dear for so indecisive an affair.[1]

[1] Notes, ut supra, p. 239, &c. and 280.—M. Dispatches, i. 336.

Sir Thomas Munro thus expresses the opinion upon the battle of Assye that was very generally entertained in India :—" If there was anything wrong at Assye it was in giving battle; but in the conduct of the action everything was right. General Wellesley gave every part of his army its full share, left no part of it unemployed; but supported, sometimes with cavalry, sometimes with infantry, every point that was pressed, at the moment that it was most necessary. Life, i 354. The letter, in which this occurs, is dated February, 1804; his opinion had not been changed, therefore, by the letter of General Wellesley to him of the 1st Nov., 1803, in answer to his objection to the action, that Col. Stevenson had been detached. General Wellesley, in this letter, and in his own remarks on the action, published in his dispatches, i. 393, shows that the separate march of his corps and Col. Stevenson's was unavoidable, but that it was so arranged as to have brought them to the point, where, according to their intelligence, the enemy was to be found, at the same time. Owing to a misapprehension of the intelligence, by which the name of a district was confounded with that of a village in it, and the consequent conclusion that they were in the village of Bokerdur, instead of the village of Assye, in the district of Bokerdur, General Wellesley came upon their left wing at the latter village, six miles nearer than the former. Here he learned that they were retreating. He conceived it dangerous to ascertain this by a reconnoissance of part of his force, and to have reconnoitred them with the whole, and then attempted to retire, would have been difficult, if not impossible in the face of their numerous cavalry; he, therefore, with the promptitude of a resolute judgment, determined to make it a battle. That the loss was so severe was in part attributable to the officer who led the picquets on the right, and was followed by the 79th direct upon the village of Assye, instead of keeping out of the range of the shot, as he was

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

Colonel Stephenson, though his march had been retarded by some unexpected impediment, arrived on the 24th; and was immediately sent after the enemy, whom the state of the troops under General Wellesley rendered him unable to pursue. The enemy had been so little broken or dispersed by their defeat, that they had little to dread, from the pursuit of Colonel Stephenson; and proceeded westward, along the bank of the Taptee, as if they meditated a descent upon Poona by a march to the southward through the Caserbary Ghaut. General Wellesley imagined that this was a demonstration to prevent a northern movement of the British troops against the city of Boorhanpore, the fortress of Asseerghur, and the rest of Sindia's places in Candesh. But that General deemed himself sufficiently strong, both to proceed against the places in question, and to watch the movements of the enemy towards the south. Remaining with his own army to the southward, he sent his commands to Stephenson, who had descended the Adjuntee

directed, the British commander having determined to manœuvre by his left. The corps on the right were then separated from the left by a large break, and were not only exposed to a terrible cannonade from Assye, but were charged by the enemy's cavalry; to repel this charge the British cavalry were brought into action sooner than was intended. It was thus brought into the cannonade; horses and men were lost: it charged among broken infantry, and separated; the unity of the body was destroyed, and it was no longer possible to use it as had been planned, when it was placed in the third line to pursue and cut up the defeated and broken enemy. From this vindication of his measures it is clear that the action could not have been avoided without mischief, and that the cost of its purchase might have been less but for one of those chances which, according to the historian of the Duke of Wellington's Peninsular campaigns — and we cannot wish for better authority — so frequently influence the fate of battles.—W.

1803.

Ghaut, in pursuit of the enemy, to continue his march to the northward, and attack Boorhanpore and Asseerghur. As soon as the plan of the British General came to the knowledge of the enemy, the Raja of Berar and Sindia separated their armies, the former marching towards Chandore, the latter making a movement to the northward, for the purpose of yielding protection to his threatened possessions. General Wellesley followed to the north, and descended the Adjuntee Ghaut on the 19th of October; Sindia, upon this, instead of continuing his movement to the north, gave it an easterly direction through the valley formed by the Taptee and Poorna rivers; while the Raja of Berar passed through the hills which formed the boundary of Candesh, and moved towards the Godavery. This seemed to require again the presence of General Wellesley in the south, who accordingly ascended the Adjuntee Ghaut on the 25th of October, and, continuing his march to the southward, passed Aurungabad on the 29th.

In the mean time Colonel Stephenson had easily accomplished the service upon which he had been detached. The city of Boorhanpore was evacuated on his approach; and was entered by the British troops on the 15th of October. On the 17th he marched upon Asseerghur, the importance of which, in the estimation of the people of India, may be conjectured from a name by which it was distinguished, the Key of the Deccan. On the 18th Colonel Stephenson attacked the pettah, and of course with success. On the 20th the batteries were opened against the fort, and within an hour the garrison

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

offered to accept the conditions which the British commander had proposed on summoning the place. In this manner the fortress was placed in the hands of the English on the 21st, and with it the whole of Sindia's dominions in the Deccan. The operations of the army were now turned against Berar. Colonel Stephenson began an easterly movement towards Sindia; and received the commands of the General to prosecute his march as far as Gawilghur, and lay siege to that, the principal fortress belonging to the Raja of Berar.[1]

In the first week of November, Jeswunt Rao Gorparah, and another person of inferior rank, arrived in the British camp, commissioned, they said, by Sindia, to treat with General Wellesley, on the subject of peace. As soon after the battle of Assye as the 8th of October, the British General had received a letter from one of Sindia's ministers, requesting that he would send to the enemy's camp, one of the British, and one of the Nizam's officers, to settle the terms of a peace.[2] With this request the General deemed it, on two accounts, inexpedient to comply; first, because the letter bore no stamp of the authority of Sindia, who might afterwards disavow it; next, because a British officer in the camp of the enemy, and the appearance, on the part of the British, of being petitioners for peace, would reani-

[1] General Wellesley's Dispatch, Papers relating to East India Affairs, (printed June, 1806,) No. 25, p. 82.—M. Wellington Dispatches, i. 468. —W.

[2] The proposal was not from one of Sindia's ministers but from Balloojee Koonjur, the Peshwa's most confidential agent, who, notwithstanding the war, continued in Sindia's camp. For General Wellesley's reply to his letter, see Wellington Dispatches, i. 426.—W.

mate the dejected minds of the enemy's troops. But he expressed his readiness honourably to receive any person whom the confederate chiefs might, for that purpose depute, to the British camp. Several subsequent proposals had been submitted to him, but all, through channels, which the principal might have disavowed. Even Gorparah, and his companion, when requested, at their first conference with General Wellesley, to exhibit their credentials, had none to produce. Though liable to be dismissed with disgrace, they were told by the British General, that they might remain in the camp, till they had time to receive from their master those powers which were necessary to enable them to treat, and those documents to substantiate their powers, without which they ought not to have been sent. In the mean time a letter arrived from Sindia, declaring his intention to send another commissioner, and disavowing Gorparah and his companion. General Wellesley, who believed, in this case, that the master was the impostor, not the servants, sent for the unhappy men, and made them acquainted with the dangerous situation in which they were placed. They convinced him, that, on their part, there was no fiction, and gratefully received his assurance that he would not render them the victims of the duplicity of their master. In the mean time, Gorparah's application for powers, and his account of his reception by the British General, had been received by Sindia, and determined that unsteady chief to send him the requisite powers. They arrived in the British camp a few hours after the conference on the disavowal had taken place, but were still defective in one es-

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

sential point;[1] for amendment in respect to which, the General advised Gorparah and his colleague again to apply. In the mean time, he solicited an armistice, and that for both confederates. This, as no ambassador, or expression of a desire for peace, had yet arrived from the Raja of Berar, and as it was impolitic to allow the hostile Princes to negotiate in common, Wellesley positively refused, in regard to the other chieftain; but granted to Sindia for the troops in the Deccan. It was dated on the 23rd of November; requiring, that Sindia should take up a position agreed upon, and not approach the British camp nearer than a distance of twenty coss. Calculating upon the division of the confederates; finding that the Raja of Berar was proceeding towards his own territories, that the number of troops he had with him was small, and diminishing every day; ceasing, in consequence, to have any apprehension for the territories of the Nizam, Wellesley descended the Ghaut by Rajoora, with a view to support, and cover the operations of Stephenson against the fort of Gawilghur. The principal part of the army of the Raja of Berar was encamped under the command of his brother, Munno Bappoo, not far from Elichpoor; and the cavalry of Sindia, who had not yet ratified the armistice, was encamped at about four miles' distance. Colonel Stephenson had advanced as far as Hattee Anderah, on the 28th of November; when,

[1] They were essentially defective, as they did not enable the envoys to cede any portion of the territory as compensation to the British Government and the allies, which was required as the basis of the pacification. Mahr. Hist. iii. 261. See also Wellington Dispatches, i. 495, 514, 522. —W.

being apprized of the situation of the enemy, and the approach of General Wellesley, he prudently halted, to enable both armies to co-operate in the attack. They joined, on the 29th, at a place within sight of the enemy's camp. Upon the approach of the British, the enemy retired; and as the troops had performed a very long march on a very hot day, the General had no intention of pursuit. Bodies of horse were in a little time observed in front. And, on pushing forward the piquets for taking up the ground of encampment, the enemy were distinctly perceived, drawn up regularly on the plains of Argaum. Late as was the period of the day, the General resolved to attack. The distance was about six miles. The British army advanced in a direction nearly parallel to that of the enemy's line, in one column, led by the British cavalry, and covered on the left and rear by the cavalry of Hyderabad and Mysore. The enemy's line extended above five miles. Sindia's part of the force, consisting of one very heavy body of cavalry, was on the right, having some Pindarees and other light troops, on their outward flank. The village of Argaum, with its extensive enclosures and gardens, was in the rear of the enemy's line; in its front was a plain, cut by a number of water-courses. The British army was formed in two lines; the infantry in the first, the cavalry in the second; the British, to support the right, the Mogul and Mysore, the left. The British line was not formed exactly parallel to that of the enemy, but with the right a little advanced to press upon the enemy's left. Some time was spent in forming the order of battle, because part of the infantry which led the column got into

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

some confusion.[1] As soon as the line was formed, the whole advanced in the greatest order. Two regiments on the right were attacked by a large body of Persians, as was supposed, whom they destroyed; a battalion also on the left received and repulsed a charge of Sindia's cavalry. As the British line advanced, the enemy retired in disorder, leaving thirty-eight pieces of cannon, with their ammunition, in the hands of the assailants. The cavalry continued their pursuit by moonlight; but night rendered it impossible to derive many advantages from the victory. The British loss, in this battle, if battle it may be called, was trifling; total in killed, wounded, and missing, 346.[2]

After the battle of Argaum, the General resolved to lose no time in commencing the siege of Gawilghur. He arrived at Elichpoor on the 5th of December, where he endeavoured to collect information for the attack. Gawilghur stands upon a lofty point of a ridge of mountains between the sources of the rivers Poorna and Taptee. It consisted of two forts; the inner, fronting to the south where the rock is most precipitous; and the outer, covering the former, toward the north-west and north. Upon deliberation

[1] Three regiments of native infantry, which had behaved admirably at Assye, were panic-struck, broke, and were running off, when the cannonade commenced; General Wellesley was luckily at hand, and was able to rally them and restore the day. He adds, "If I had not been there, I am convinced we should have lost the day. As it was, so much time elapsed before they could be formed again, that there was not daylight sufficient for effecting all that might have been performed." Letter to Major Shawe, Dispatches, i. 533.—W.

[2] Let. Gov-Gen. in council to the Secret Committee, dated 28th Dec. 1803, ibid. p. 297; also Calcutta Gazettes, ibid. p. 290—295.—M. Dispatches, i. 528.—W.

1803.

it appeared advisable to make the principal attack upon the northern side. To this service the corps of Colonel Stephenson was destined, having been equipped for that purpose at Asseerghur. On the 7th, both divisions of the army marched from Elichpoor; that under Colonel Stephenson, by a road of about thirty miles in length, through the mountains, the road which led most directly to the point of attack; that under General Wellesley, with all the cavalry, in a different direction, with a view to cover, and if possible assist them, by other attacks on the south and the west. The march of Colonel Stephenson, through the mountains, was attended with almost insuperable difficulties. The heavy ordnance, and stores, were dragged by hand, over mountains, and through ravines, for nearly the whole distance, by roads which it had been previously necessary for the troops to make. On the 12th, Colonel Stephenson reached his ground, and at night erected two batteries in front of the north face of the fort. On the same night the troops of General Wellesley constructed a battery on the mountain under the southern gate; but as it was impossible to get up the heavy guns, it proved of little advantage. On the evening of the 14th, the breaches in the walls of the outer fort were practicable. Preparations were made during the day; and the assault was to be given on the following morning. Beside the party destined for the storm, two detachments were led, one toward the southern, another toward the north-west gate, for the purpose merely of drawing the attention of the enemy, as neither of them could get into the fort till the storming party should open the gates. The troops

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

advanced about ten o'clock; and the outer fort was soon in possession of the assailants. The wall of the inner fort was then to be carried. It had not been breached, and attempts were made in vain upon the gate. A place, however, was found, at which the wall might be escaladed, when Captain Campbell mounted with the light infantry of the 94th regiment, and opened the gate. After this the garrison made no resistance. "Vast numbers of them," says the General, "were killed, particularly at different gates."[1]

While the two great divisions of the British army were thus engaged, the minor objects of the war had been no less successfully pursued.

The detachment of British troops which had been assembled at Allahabad, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Powell, for the occupation of Bundelcund, crossed the Jumna, and entered that province, on the 6th of September. The situation of the province at that period was briefly as follows.

Chuttersaul, having succeeded a long line of Hindu ancestors, in the Rajaship of Bundelcund, of whom a considerable number had existed in the state of vassals to the Mogul throne, availed himself of the decline of that monarchy, not only to re-establish his independence, but enlarge his dominions. Alarmed, however, at the prospect of what was likely to follow from the power and disposition of his Mahratta neighbours, he sought for protection to his house, by securing the favour of the most powerful of the Mahratta leaders. For this purpose, though the father

[1] Dispatches, i. 550.

of a numerous offspring, he adopted Bajee Rao, the first Peshwa, as his son; and left him a third part of his dominions. The rest he divided equally between two of his sons. Further subdivisions took place in succeeding generations. Jealousies arose among the different branches of the family; and wars ensued. The country, as was the habitual state of Hindu countries, was perpetually ravaged by hostile contentions; and at last so much enfeebled, that it offered an easy prey to any invader.

While Sindia made his conclusive attempt, in 1786, upon the expiring sovereignty of Delhi, the Peshwa joined in the expedition, with a view of joining also in the plunder. His object was to obtain the Doab, or district between the Jumna and Ganges; and he placed Ali Bahaudur, the grandson, by an illegitimate father, of Bajee Rao, the first Peshwa, whom he destined to govern it in his name, at the head of the troops whom he sent to join in the expedition. In the course of the enterprise, a breach ensued between Sindia and Ali Bahaudur, who was joined by another chief, named Raja Himmut Bahaudur.[1] Frustrated in their views upon the Dooab, which Sindia destined, probably from the beginning, for himself, these two chieftains directed their arms against Bundelcund. From the distracted state of the country, it was speedily overrun, and apparently subdued; but in a mountainous region, where every village was a fortress, the authority of the Mahratta

[1] Himmut Bahadur was a religious character, or Gosain, and also a soldier of fortune, who was first in the service of the Nawab of Oude. He availed himself of the state of anarchy of Bundelkand to establish himself in the province, and is said to have invited Ali Bahadur to invade it.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

government was not easily, indeed never completely, established. Ali Bahaudur agreed to yield obedience and tribute to the Peshwa, the latter of which was never in his power. He died in 1802, having spent fourteen years without completing the reduction of Bundelcund, one of the fortresses of which, the celebrated Callinger, he was fruitlessly besieging at the time of his death. His son, Shumshere Bahaudur, eighteen years of age, was then resident at Poona; and the Raja Himmut Bahaudur, who had always retained a great share of power, and who now found the government at his disposal, appointed a distant relation of the family regent, during the absence of the prince.[1] In this situation were the affairs of Bundelcund, when the Peshwa was driven from Poona, and the war broke out between the British government and the Mahratta chiefs.

In the month of August, 1803, certain alterations were agreed upon between the British government and the Peshwa, in the terms of the treaty of Bassein. Of these the principal were, that the English, in lieu of some of the ceded districts, and as a compensation for an additional number of subsidized troops, should accept of territory in Bundelcund, which it remained

[1] The circumstances are, elsewhere, somewhat differently related. The uncle of Shamsher Bahadur, Ganee Bahadur, placed on the musnud another of his nephews, Zulphikar Ali, an infant, intending to establish his own authority under the title of Regent, with the concurrence of Himut Bahadur. Shamsher Bahadur, however, with the sanction of Amrut Rao, whilst temporary Peshwa, proceeded to Bundelkand, threw his uncle into confinement, and assumed the sovereignty. Himut Bahadur, although he is said to have invited the Raja into the country, and to have aided him in the recovery of his rights, became alarmed at his violence, and sought his own safety by proposing to the British to enter into the province, and co-operated with them in its subjugation. Memoir on Bundelcund, Asiat. An. Reg. 1806. Pogson's Account of the Bundelas.—W.

for them to subdue, yielding, by estimate, a revenue of 36,16,000 rupees.[1] As Himmut Bahaudur, in the probable success of the English, anticipated the loss of his own power, he ingeniously resolved to assist them in their project, on condition of obtaining an advantageous indemnity to himself. He was accordingly ready, with a force of about 13,000, or 14,000 men, as soon as the detachment of the British army entered the territory of Bundelcund. He joined the detachment on the 15th of September: on the 23rd they arrived, in conjunction, on the bank of the river Cane; and found the troops of Shumshere Bahaudur, a considerable force, encamped on the opposite side. After reducing several forts, and establishing the British authority in the adjacent district, they crossed the Cane on the 10th of October; and on the 12th gave battle to Shumshere Bahaudur; who retreated with loss, and shortly after, despairing of his ability to maintain the contest, crossed the river Betwa, and retired from the province.

For seizing the province of Cuttack, a part of the northern division of the Madras army, doing duty in the Northern Circars, was destined to march from Ganjam, and to be reinforced by a detachment of 6216 men from Bengal. Of this detachment, a body of 854 were collected at Jalasore, to be ready to penetrate into Cuttack, as soon as the movements of the principal force should render it necessary; 521 were to take possession of Balasore; and 1300 were to occupy a post at Midnapore, with a view to support the detachments at Jalasore and Balasore, and

[1] Letter, ut supra. Ibid. p. 200, 535.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

afford protection to the Company's frontier against any sudden incursion of the Raja's horse. Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, the officer chosen to conduct this expedition, having been seized with an illness, which threatened his life, Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt was appointed to act in his stead.

The troops marched from Ganjam on the 8th of September, and on the 14th took possession of Manickpatam, whence the Mahrattas fled upon their approach. Application was made to the Brahmens of Juggunnaut to place the Pagoda under British protection: and with this they complied. The next object was Cuttack; but the inundations produced by the rains allowed not the march to begin before the 24th of September, and even then rendered it so laborious and slow, being also, in some degree, harassed by parties of the enemy's horse, that it was not completed before the 10th of October. The town yielded without resistance, and operations were begun for the reduction of the fort. Of the other detachments, that appointed to take possession of Ballasore had there landed on the 21st of September and soon overcame all the resistance by which it was opposed. The detachment formed at Jalasore left that place on the 23rd of September, and on the 4th of October arrived without opposition at Balasore. On the 10th of that month, a force of 816 men marched from Balasore, by order of the Governor-General, to aid Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt in the reduction of Cuttack. Barabutty, the fort of Cuttack, was a place of considerable strength, and had only one entrance, by a bridge, over a wet ditch of enormous dimensions. A battery, which

opened on the morning of the 14th, in a few hours took off nearly all the defences, and silenced the guns on one side, when it was resolved immediately to try the assault. In passing the bridge, the storming party, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Clayton, were exposed to a heavy, but ill-directed fire of musquetry from the fort; and forty minutes elapsed before they succeeded in blowing open the wicket, at which the men entered singly. Two other gates were forced after some resistance; when the enemy hastened to abandon the fort. The fall of this place delivered the whole of the province of Cuttack into the hands of the English.[1]

The conquest of Sindia's territories in Guzerat was made by a force from Bombay, consisting of one European regiment, with a proportion of artillery and sepoys commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Woodington. They marched from Baroda on the 21st of August, and encamped within two miles of Baroach on the 23rd. Though the next day, when the English advanced upon the place, the enemy were seen posted, as for resistance, in front of the pettah, they were soon compelled to retreat within the fort. Next morning, Colonel Woodington took possession of the pettah; and on the 29th, the breach in the fort was reported practicable. The storming party were led by Captain Richardson, and displayed the virtues seldom wanting in British troops on such an occasion. The enemy resisted with considerable spirit, for a little time; but then fled, with slight loss to the assailants. After

[1] Letter, ut supra. Ibid. p. 243—5.—M. Dispatches, iii, 373, 430.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

the capture of Baroach and its dependencies, yielding a revenue of eleven lacs of rupees, Colonel Woodington proceeded against Champaneer, the only district which Sindia now possessed in the province of Guzerat. It was defended by a fort, on Powanghur, one of the detached hills, which form so many places of great natural strength in India. Champaneer, the pettah, was carried by assault with inconsiderable loss. At first the Kelledar of the fort refused to surrender; but, on the 17th of September, when preparations were made for the assault, he capitulated, and the fort was occupied by the British troops.[1]

The Mahratta chieftains were now eager to escape by negotiation the ruin which their arms were unable to avert. On the evening of the 30th of November, the day after the battle of Argaum, a vakeel arrived, bearing a letter from the Raja of Berar, and requesting a conference with the British General. First, a discussion arose about the origin of the war; the vakeel maintaining that the British government, General Wellesley maintaining that the Raja, was the aggressor. The vakeel alleged, that the war commenced, because the Raja did not obey the orders of Colonel Collins, in withdrawing with his troops; Wellesley affirmed that the war commenced, because the Raja, along with Sindia, had assumed a position which threatened the British allies. The vakeel contended, that the troops of the Raja were on his own territory; that his presence there was necessary, both because the contest

[1] Letter, ut supra. Ibid. p. 243.—M. Dispatches, iii. 416, 432.—W.

between Sindia and Holkar was destructive to Hindustan, and because the Peshwa had made a treaty with the English, contrary to the custom of the Mahratta states: Wellesley replied, that for mediation between Sindia and Holkar, the position taken by the Raja was unnecessary, and that with the treaty of the Peshwa the English would give him no leave to interfere. The vakeel, as the representative of the weakest party, at last declared, that, however the war began, his master was very desirous of bringing it to an end. He was then questioned about his powers, but said he had only a commission to learn the wishes of the British General, and to express the desire of the Raja to comply. Compensation, for the injuries of aggression and for the expenses of the war, was declared to be the only basis on which the English would treat. The vakeel applied for a suspension of arms, which was absolutely rejected; and leave to remain in camp, till he should receive powers sufficient to treat, which was also refused, and he was advised to take up his intermediate residence in some of the neighbouring towns.

A second conference took place on the 9th of November, when the vakeel produced letters from the Raja, expressing assent to the conditions which the British General had presented for the basis of negotiation. The cessions demanded by the English, to effect the stipulated compensation, were then described: For the Company, the whole of the province of Cuttack, including the port of Balasore: For their ally the Nizam, the country lying between his own frontier and the river Wurda to the eastward, and

1803. between his own frontier and the hills in which are situated the forts of Gawilghur and Nernulla, to the northward; together with renunciation of all the claims which the Raja might have ever advanced on any part of his dominions: And for their other allies, any of the Zemindars and Rajas, the tributaries or subjects of the Raja, with whom the English had formed connexions during the war, the confirmation of all their engagements. The vakeel exclaimed against the exorbitance of these demands, which were sufficient, he said, not only to reduce, but entirely to destroy the state of his master.

"Major General Wellesley replied, that the Raja was a great politician; and ought to have calculated rather better his chances of success, before he commenced the war; but that having commenced it, it was proper that he should suffer, before he should get out of the scrape."[1]

After several discussions, in which General Wellesley relaxed only so far as to reserve to the Raja the forts of Gawilghur and Nernulla, with contiguous districts yielding four lacs of annual revenue, the terms of the treaty were arranged on the 16th, and signed by the British General and the Mahratta vakeel, on the 17th of December, 1803. The forts were left to the Raja, as not being calculated to be of much advantage to the Nizam, while they were necessary to the Raja for coercing the predatory people on the hills; and the contiguous districts

[1] Memorandum transmitted by General Wellesley to the Governor-General of the conferences between him and the Ambassador of the Raja of Berar. Papers relating to East India affairs (printed by order of the House of Commons, June, 1806), No. 25, p. 121.

were granted, in order to leave him an interest in restraining the depredators, to whose incursions these districts, together with the rest of the adjoining country, were continually exposed. Of the country to which the Raja was thus obliged to resign his pretensions, he had possessed but a sort of divided sovereignty, in conjunction with the Nizam. It was originally a part of the Subah of the Deccan; but the Mahrattas had established over it a claim, at first to one-fifth, afterwards by degrees to one-half, at last to four-fifths, and in some parts to the whole, of the revenues. Though an extensive and fertile country, it was not, however, computed that the Raja had annually realized from it more than thirty lacs of rupees.

To some other articles; as, the exclusion from his service of Europeans and Americans, the mutual appointment of resident ambassadors, and the renunciation of the confederacy; scarcely any objection was experienced on the part of the Raja.[1]

If he had not prevented further hostilities by compliance, the British General was prepared to pursue him to Nagpoor, the capital of his dominions, while the troops in Sumbulpore and Cuttack were ready to co-operate, and General Lake, having subdued all opposition in Hindustan, was at liberty to detach a force into Berar.[2]

At the very time of negotiation, the Governor-General prepared a copious delineation of his views respecting the objects to be obtained by concluding

[1] Memorandum, ut supra; Letter of General Wellesley to the Governor-General; and copy of the treaty. Ibid. p. 122—132.

[2] Notes relative to the peace. Ibid. p. 183.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

treaties of peace with the belligerent chiefs, and sent it, bearing date the 11th of December, under the title of Instructions, to General Wellesley. Even now the formation of what is called a defensive alliance with Sindia, that is, the substitution in the service of Sindia of the Company's troops to Sindia's own troops, was an object of solicitude with the British ruler: And he prepared two plans of concession; one on the supposition of his accepting; another on the supposition of his rejecting, the proposition of a subsidiary force. The singular part of the offer was, to maintain the subsidiary force, if equal to that which was placed at Hyderabad, without any expense to Sindia, and wholly at the Company's expense; for it was distinctly proposed, that for the expense of that force, no assignment of territory beyond that of which the cession would at all events be exacted of him, nor any other funds whatsoever, should be required.[1]

By the ratification of the treaty with the Raja of Berar, the whole of the forces under General Wellesley were free to act against Sindia: The troops which had been employed in reducing the possessions of that chief in Guzerat, having accomplished that service, were now ready to penetrate into Malwa to his capital, Ougein, for which purpose they had actually marched to the frontier of Guzerat: And the detachment which had been prepared by General Lake to co-operate in the subjugation of Berar, might now commence operations on the unsubdued dominions of Sindia.[2]

[1] Instructions of Governor-General, parag. 62. Ibid. p. 121.

[2] Notes relative to the peace with the confederate Mahratta chieftains. Ibid. p. 341.—M. Dispatches, iii. 497.—W.

1803.

It was not till the 8th of December that the various artifices of that chieftain, to procrastinate, and to evade the proposition of admitting compensation as the basis of negotiation, were terminated. His vakeels insisted that, as his losses were still greater than those of the English, if compensation were the question, it was to him that the greater compensation would be due. It was answered, that he was the aggressor. But this was the point in debate; this was what Sindia denied. He was given, however, to understand, that he was the unsuccessful party, and of this he had a bitter and certain experience. A long discussion ensued on the cessions to which, under the title of compensation, the English laid claim. A further conference took place on the 11th. Other conferences followed, on the 24th, the 26th, and the 28th; when compliance was expressed with the terms, from which it was found that the English would not recede. On the following day, the treaty was signed. The Maharaja ceded all his rights of sovereignty, in the country between the Jumna and the Ganges, and to the northward of the territories belonging to the Rajas of Jeypoor, Jodepoor, and Gohud; he ceded the fort and territory of Baroach; the fort and territory of Ahmednugger; all the possessions which he had held on the south side of the Adjuntee hills to the Godavery river; all claims upon his Majesty Shah Aulum, or to interfere in his affairs; and all claims of every description upon the British government, or any of its allies, the Subahdar of the Deccan, the Peshwa, and Anund Rao Gaekwar. Provision was made for the independence of all those minor states, in the region of the Jumna,

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

which had formerly borne the yoke of Sindia, but had made engagements with the English during the recent war. The fort of Asseerghur, the city of Boorhanpore, the forts of Powanghur, and Gohud, with the territories depending upon them, were restored. Sindia was also allowed to retain certain lands in the vicinity of Ahmednugger; and within the cessions which he had made in the north, his claims were allowed to certain lands which he represented as the private estates of his family, and to the possession of which none of the rights of sovereignty were to be annexed. Certain jaghires and pensions, which Sindia or his predecessor had granted to individuals, either of their family, or among their principal servants, in the ceded countries, or upon their revenues, were confirmed, to the amount of seventeen lacs of rupees per annum. Sindia most readily engaged not to receive into his service any Frenchman, or the subject of any European or American power, that might be at war with the British government. Lastly, an article was inserted, leaving the way open to form afterwards an additional treaty for a subsidiary alliance; which, in this case, was not to be subsidiary; for the English government stipulated to afford the troops their pay and subsistence, without compensation either in money or land.[1]

[1] The reasons for this measure are thus explained by General Wellesley: "Under these circumstances," (the inability of Sindia, with his reduced resources, to resist Holkar,) "I thought it expedient to hold forth to Sindia an option of becoming a party to the general defensive alliance; and as a further inducement to him to agree to that treaty, to engage that the assistance to be given to him should occasion no further diminution of his revenues. I was induced to make this last engagement by the consideration that Sindia would not agree to the treaty of general defensive alliance, although his ministers proposed that he should unite himself

1803.

Of these cessions it was agreed, between the British government and its allies, that the territory situated to the westward of the River Wurda and the southward of the hills on which were the forts of Gawilghur and Nernulla, together with the territory between the Adjuntee hills and the River Godavery, should belong to the Nizam; that Ahmednuggur and its territory should belong to the Peshwa, to whose capital it so nearly approached; and that all the rest should belong to the English. The minor princes in the region of the Jumna, who formerly bore the yoke of Sindia, and whom it was the policy of the Governor-General now to render dependent upon the British government, and to form of them a sort of barrier on the British frontier against any aggression of the Mahratta powers, were the Rajas of Bhurtpore, Jodepore, Jyepoor, Macherry, and Boondee, the Rana of Gohud, and Ambajee Rao Inglia.

With the first five of these minor princes, who were already in possession of acknowledged sovereignties, treaties of alliance were formed, on condition that the English should take no tribute from them, nor interfere in the affairs of their govern-

more closely with the Company, if he was to be obliged to pay for the assistance which he should receive; and that, if he does agree to that treaty, the peace of India is secured as far as it can be by human means. I have every reason to believe also, that when Sindia will wind up his affairs at the close of this war, he will not have a disposable clear revenue, such as the British Government would require to pay the expenses of the force which might be given to him." Wellington Dispatches, i. 561. The reasons, therefore, were simply that Sindia would not, and could not bear the cost of the subsidiary force; and as it was considered an object of great political importance that it should be furnished, the British Government necessarily applied to it a portion of the revenue which they had taken away from Sindia.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

ment; that, in case of the invasion of the Company's territory, they should assist in repelling the enemy; and that the Company should guarantee their dominions against all aggression, they defraying the expense of the aid which they might receive. The case of the remaining two chieftains required some further arrangements. The Rana of Gohud had been dispossessed of his territories by Sindia; and all of them, together with the neighbouring districts, had been consigned to Ambajee, one of Sindia's leading commanders, as renter. Ambajee had deserted Sindia during the war; and it was now determined to make a partition, in sovereignty, of the territories which he rented, between him and the Rana of Gohud, reserving the fort and city of Gualior to the Company. The same condition was contracted, as in the case of the other three princes, respecting mutual defence; but it was appointed that three battalions of the Company's sepoys should be stationed with the Rana, and paid for by him, at the rate of 75,000 rupees a month.[1]

The condition to which Sindia was reduced, by the war, and by the sacrifices which he had made for the attainment of peace, excited in his breast the liveliest apprehensions with regard to the power and designs of Holkar; and he now applied

[1] Memorandum of the conferences between Major-General the Hon. Arthur Wellesley, and the Ambassadors of Dowlut Rao Sindia; Letter from General Wellesley to Governor-General; Treaty of peace with Sindia; and treaties with the Rajas of Bhurtpore, &c. Ibid. p. 132—164; and the Governor-General's "Notes relative to the peace concluded between the British Government and the confederate Mahratta chieftains, and to the various questions arising out of the terms of the pacification." Ibid. p. 177—199.

himself in earnest to interpose, if possible, the shield of the Company between himself and this fortunate antagonist. By one expedient alone, was he permitted to hope, that this important object could be attained; by entering into the system of general alliance, and subsidiary defence. It was agreed, accordingly, that Major Malcolm should repair to the camp of Sindia, to settle the terms of a treaty of this description. The business was accomplished, and the treaty signed at Boorhanpore on the 27th of February, 1804. There were two remarkable circumstances. One was, the price which the Governor-General consented to pay for the supposed advantage of placing a body of British troops at the disposal of Sindia, and pledging the English government for his defence. The amount of the force defined by the treaty was 6000 infantry, and the usual proportion of artillery. These troops were to be maintained entirely at the expense of the English government, with the proceeds of the newly-acquired dominions; and that they might not establish an influence in Sindia's government, they were not even to be stationed within his territory, but at some convenient place near his frontier within the Company's dominions. The other remarkable circumstance was, not the condition by which the English government made itself responsible for the defence of the dominions of Sindia, but that, by which it engaged to make itself the instrument of his despotism; to become the executioner of every possible atrocity towards his own subjects, of which he might think proper to be guilty. It bound itself, by an express stipulation, not to interfere between

1803.

him and his subjects, how dreadful soever his conduct in regard to his subjects might be. But the moment his subjects should take measures to resist him, whatsoever the enormities against which they might seek protection, the English government engaged, without scruple, and without condition, to act immediately for their *suppression and chastisement*. Where was now the doctrine of the Governor-General for the deposition of princes whose government was bad? Where was the regard to that disgrace which, as he told the princes whom he deposed, redounded to the British name, whenever they supported a government that was bad?[1]

In forming his connexions with other states, either for war or peace, the Maharaja bound himself to the slight condition of only consulting with the Company's government, but by no means of being governed by its decisions; and in any war to be carried on by their mutual exertions it was agreed, without any mention made of the proportion of troops, that in the partition of conquests the shares should be equal. The stipulation with regard to Frenchmen and other Europeans, or Americans, was made still more agreeable to the taste of the

[1] This virtuous indignation is not called for by the stipulations of the treaty. The British government engaged not to give support to Sindia's relations, dependants, military chiefs, and servants, with respect to whom the Maharaja was absolute, and to assist in reducing and punishing them on his requisition if they rebelled or acted in opposition to his authority. (Article 8,) A previous article, however, provides that the subsidiary force is not to be employed on trifling occasions, (Article 6,) a clause which implies the exercise of the judgment of the British government as to the occasions on which its troops were to be employed; a discretionary power also involved in the presence of the Resident. It is not true, therefore, that the treaty binds the British to act immediately against the Raja's subjects without scruple, or without condition.—W.

times; for it was promised by Sindia that he would allow no such person to remain in his dominions without the consent of the Company's government.[1]

The Governor-General seemed now to have accomplished the whole of his objects; and lofty was the conception which he formed of the benefits attained. The famous official document, which has been already quoted, "Notes, relative to the peace concluded between the British government and the confederate Mahratta chieftains," concludes with "a general recapitulation of the benefits which the British government in India has derived from the success of the war, and from the combined arrangements of the pacification, including the treaties of peace, of partition, and of defensive alliance and subsidy." It exhibits them under no less than *nineteen* several heads: 1. The reduction of the power and resources of Sindia and the Raja of Berar; 2. The destruction of the French power; 3. The security against its revival; 4. The annexation to the British dominions of the territory occupied by Perron; 5. The annexation of other territories in the Doab, and the command of the Jumna; 6. The deliverance of the Emperor Shah Aulum from the control of the French; 7. The security and influence derived from the system of alliance with the petty states along the Jumna against the Mahrattas; 8. The security and influence derived from the possession of Gualior, and the subsidiary force

[1] Treaty of alliance and mutual defence. Ibid. p. 164,

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

established in Gohud; 9. The means of defence derived from these same fountains against any other enemy on the north-western frontier; 10. The advantages both in security and wealth derived from Cuttack; 11. The advantages derived from the possession of Baroach, which left Sindia no direct communication with the sea, or with the transmarine enemies of the British government; 12. The security derived from Baroach against the intrigues of the French with any native state; 13. The additional security bestowed upon the British interests in Guzerat, by the possession of Baroach, and the abolition of Sindia's claims on the Gaekwar; 14. The revenue and commerce derived from Baroach; 15. The benefits bestowed upon the Peshwa and Nizam; 16. The increased renown of the British nation, both for power and virtue; 17. The "defensive and *subsidiary*[1] alliance" with Dowlut Rao Sindia; 18. The power of controlling the causes of dissension and contest among the Mahratta states; the power of keeping them weak; the power of preventing their combination with one another, or with the enemies of the British state; 19. The security afforded to the Company and its allies from the turbulence of the Mahratta character and state.[2]

This is exhibited as an instructive specimen of a good mode of making up an account.

After this enumeration, the document breaks out into the following triumphant declaration:—"The general arrangements of the pacification; combined

[1] Subsidiary it could not well be, when he paid no subsidy.

[2] Papers, ut supra, p. 197, 198. Dispatches, 4, 132.

with the treaties of partition, with the defensive and subsidiary alliance now concluded with Dowlut Rao Sindia, with the condition of our external relations and with the internal prosperity of the British empire; have finally placed the British power in India, in that commanding position with regard to other states, which affords *the only possible security for the permanent tranquillity and prosperity of these valuable and important possessions.*"

It is material here to mark, what is thus solemnly declared, by one of the most eminent of all our Indian rulers; that without that artificial system, which he created, of subsidiary troops, and dependence, under the name of alliance, there is no such thing as security for "the British empire in the East."[1]

The document goes on to boast, that the troops, thus bestowed upon the Peshwa, the Nizam, Sindia, the Gaekwar, and Rana of Gohud, would exceed 24,000 men; that all these would be maintained at the expense of those allies, which was incorrect, as Sindia paid nothing for the 6000 allotted to him; that this amount of troops would always be maintained in a state of perfect equipment, and might be directed against any of the principal states of India, without affecting the tranquillity of the Company's possessions, or adding materially to its expenses.

It then declares:—"The position, extent, and equipment of this military force, combined with the privilege which the British government possesses of arbitrating differences and dissensions between the several states with which it is connected by the obli-

[1] Contrast with it the opinions of his successor. Vide infra.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

gations of alliance, enable the British power to control the causes of that internal war which, during so long a term of years, has desolated many of the most fertile provinces of India; has occasioned a constant and hazardous fluctuation of power among the native states; has encouraged a predatory spirit among the inhabitants; and formed an inexhaustible source for the supply of military adventurers, prepared to join the standard of any turbulent chieftain for the purpose of ambition, plunder, or rebellion. No danger can result from the operation of our defensive alliances, of involving the British government in war; excepting in cases of manifest justice, and irresistible necessity. The power of arbitration, reserved in all cases by the British government, not only secures the Company from the contingency of war, in the prosecution of the unjust views of any of our allies, but affords a considerable advantage in authorizing and empowering the British government to check, by amicable negotiation, the primary and remote sources of hostilities in every part of India."[1]

When extracted from these sounding words, the meaning is, that the British government in India had obtained two advantages: 1. An enlargement of revenue: 2. Increased security against the recurrence of war, or the evils of an unsuccessful one.

1. Additional revenue is only useful, when it is not balanced by an equal increase of expense. The Governor-General talks loudly of the additional revenue; but not a word of the additional expense. If we had no more evidence but this, it would be a legitimate inference, that the expense was omitted,

[1] Papers, ut supra, p. 198

because it would not have been favourable to his argument to speak of it. We have abundant general evidence that the expense of governing enlarged territory, in almost all places, though more especially in India, equals, or more frequently surpasses, all the revenue which it is possible to draw from it. We shall presently see in what degree the facts of the present case conform to the general rule. If it turns out that the expense of governing the new territory is equal to its revenue, it follows that the enormous expense of the war, generated by the treaty of Bassein, and by the passion of the Governor-General for subsidiary alliances, remained altogether without compensation on the score of money.

2. Let us inquire, if there is more solidity in the alleged advantage, in which, single and solitary, the whole compensation for the war remains to be sought, viz. security against the evils of war.

Now, at first view it would appear that an obligation to defend a great number of Indian states, an obligation of taking part in all their miserable and never-ending quarrels, was of all receipts the most effectual, for being involved almost incessantly in the evils of war.

This increased exposure to the evils of war was far outweighed, according to the Governor-General, by the power of preventing war through the influence of the subsidiary troops.

Unfortunately the question which hence arises admits not of that degree of limitation and precision which enables it to receive a conclusive answer. The probabilities, though sufficiently great, must be weighed, and without any fixed and definite standard.

BOOK VI CHAP. 12.

1803.

One thing, in the mean time, is abundantly certain, that if the East India Company was able to keep any Indian state from going to war, this must have been, because it was the master of that state, because that state was dependent upon the East India Company, and bound in all its concerns to obey the Company's will. But if this were the case, and if the native governments were thus deprived of all independent power, infinitely better would it have been to have removed them entirely. Two prodigious advantages would thus have been gained; the great expense of keeping them would have been saved; and the people in the countries under them would have been delivered from the unspeakable miseries of their administration; miseries always increased to excess by the union of a native, with the British, government. But, to place this question on the broadest basis: The policy of taking the whole of the Mahratta country immediately under the British government would either have been good, or it would have been bad. If it would have been good, why was it not followed: when the power was not wanting, and when the right of conquest would have applied with just as much propriety to the part that was not done, as the part that was? If it would not have been good policy to take the whole of the Mahratta country under the British government; in other words, to have had the responsibility of defending it with the whole of its resources; it was surely much worse policy to take the responsibility of defending it, with only a part of those resources.

Another question, however, may be, not whether something better than the defensive alliances might

1803.

not have been done, but whether something might not have been done that was worse; whether, if the government of the Mahratta princes was not entirely dissolved, it was not better to bind them by defensive alliances, than to leave them unbound; whether, according to the Governor-General, the British state was not more exempt from the danger of war, with the alliances, than without them.

To answer this question, it must be maturely considered, under what danger of war the British government would have been placed, without the alliances. It is not the way to arrive at a just conclusion, to set out with allowing that this danger was just any thing which any body pleases. It may be pretty confidently affirmed, that with good government within their own territories, under the known greatness of their power, the English were almost wholly exempt from the danger of war; because, in this case, war could reach them through but one medium, that of invasion; and from invasion, surely, they had little to dread.

Allowing then, that the subsidiary alliances were a scheme calculated to prevent the danger of war; as far as regards the British government, there was little or nothing of that sort to prevent; the subsidiary alliances were a great and complicated apparatus, for which, when got up, there was nothing to do; a huge cause prepared when there was no effect to be produced.[1]

[1] The Governor-General, indeed, takes it as one of his benefits, that the native states would be restrained from war among themselves. But he does not inform us to whom the benefit would accrue. If the English were secure from aggression, the wars of the native princes were of no importance to them. If humanity is pretended, and the deliverance of

BOOK VI CHAP. 12. 1803.

This is decisive in regard to the practical question. In speculation, another question may still be raised; namely, whether, if the British state had been exposed to the danger of wars, the scheme of the subsidiary alliances was a good instrument for preventing them. In India, as in all countries in corresponding circumstances, one thing saves from aggression, and one thing alone, namely, power; the prospect which the aggressor has before him, of suffering by his aggression, rather than of gaining by it. The question, then, is shortly this; did the subsidiary alliances make the English stronger, in relation to the princes of India, than they would have been without those alliances?

The subsidiary alliances yielded two things; they yielded a portion of territory; and they yielded a certain position of a certain portion of British troops. In regard to the territory, it may, at any rate, be assumed, as doubtful, whether, in the circumstances of the British state, at the time of the treaty of Bassein, it could be rendered intrinsically stronger by any accession of territory; since, by act of parliament, the question stands decided the opposite way: much more, then, is it doubtful, whether it could be rendered stronger by an accession of territory, which imported the obligation and expense not merely of defending itself, but of defending the whole kingdom

the people from the horrors of war, it is to be replied with dreadful certainty, that under the atrocities of a native government supported by British power, the horrors of peace were no improvement upon the horrors of war. The sufferings of the people under the Nabobs of the Carnatic and Oude were described by the English government itself, perhaps with some exaggeration, as unmatched in any portion of India.

to which it was annexed. It will not, then, be assumed, that the mere territory gotten by the English was the circumstance looked to for preventing the evils of war. If it was that, the territory might have been taken without the alliances.

The only remaining circumstance is, the position of the troops. For, as to the other conditions, about not holding intercourse with other states, except in conjunction with the English, these were merely verbal; and would be regarded by the Indian governments, just as long, as they would have been regarded without the alliance; namely, as long as the English could punish them, whenever they should do what the English would dislike.

Now, surely, it is not a proposition which it will be easy to maintain, that a country is stronger with regard to its neighbours, if it has its army dispersed in several countries; a considerable body of it in one country, and a considerable body in another, than if it has the whole concentrated within itself; and skilfully placed in the situation best calculated to overawe any neighbour from whom danger may be apprehended. There are many combinations of circumstances in which this would be a source of weakness, much more than of strength.

If it is said, that the position of the English subsidiary troops, with a native prince, imported the annihilation, or a great reduction, of his own force; this, in the circumstances of India, cannot be regarded as a matter of almost any importance. In a country swarming with military adventurers, and which fights with undisciplined troops, an army can always be got together with great rapidity, as soon

1803.

as a leader can hold out a reasonable prospect that something will be gained by joining his standards. The whole history of India is a proof, that a man who is without an army to-day, may, if he has the due advantages, to-morrow (if we may use an eastern hyperbole) be surrounded by a great one. Of this we have had a great and very recent example, in the army with which Holkar, a mere adventurer, was enabled to meet, and to conquer Sindia, the most powerful native prince in India.

It was, in a short time, as we shall see, found by the British government itself, that it could regard the presence of subsidiary troops as a very weak bridle in the mouth of a native prince, when he began to forget his own weakness. The weakness, in fact, was the bridle. If he remained weak, that was enough, without the subsidiary troops. If he grew strong, the subsidiary troops, it was seen, would not long restrain him.

I cannot aim at the production of all those circumstances, on both sides of this question, which would be necessary to be produced, and to be weighed, to demonstrate accurately the probabilities of good or of evil, attached to such a scheme of policy, as that of the subsidiary alliances of Governor-General Wellesley. I have endeavoured to conduct the reader into the paths of inquiry; and leave the question undecided.

In summing up the account of the treaty of Bassein, we can only, therefore, approach to a determinate conclusion. On the one side, there is the certain and the enormous evil, of the expenditure of the Mahratta war. Whether the subsidiary alliances,

which were looked to for compensation, were calculated to yield any compensation, and did not rather add to the evils, is seen to be at the least exceedingly doubtful. The policy of the treaty of Bassein cannot, therefore, be misunderstood.[1]

[1] That many of the consequences of the Mahratta war, enumerated by Lord Wellesley were real and permanent political advantages to the British dominion in India cannot be questioned. The power of the principal Mahratta chiefs was reduced, and their military reputation destroyed; in the like proportion the power of the British government was augmented, and its renown enhanced; and an immense stride was effected towards that exalted position in which it now stands as the paramount sovereign of Hindustan. That Great Britain reaps substantial benefits from its ascendency will be scarcely disputed. That India derives benefit from it is also undeniable, although it may not be of that value which the English who are the greatest gainers are fond of representing it. That the Governor-General was mistaken in his anticipations of at once preserving perpetual tranquillity, subsequent events sufficiently proved; and it would be an impeachment of his humanity and justice to suppose that he could have foreseen the disastrous results which his treaties of defensive alliance inflicted on those princes who were tempted or compelled to become his allies. He did not make a sufficient allowance for the reluctance with which it is natural for man in every station of life to part with independence, and especially for princes to relinquish the authority they have received from their predecessors. The nature of the subsidiary connexion imposed upon the subsidized prince a state of subjection to which he could scarcely be expected cheerfully to submit; and the vain attempts made by him to shake off his fetters, either riveted them more firmly, or terminated in his annihilation. It is true that the conditions of a subsidiary alliance leave to a native prince the power of ruling his own subjects with benignity, wisdom and justice. There is no reason why he should be a sensualist or an opprressor because he has not an army at his command. Such, however, is human nature in the East—possibly also in other quarters of the world—that when responsibility is withdrawn, and impunity secured, the motives to useful activity are weakened or destroyed, and the objects of interest are exclusively concentred in individual indulgence. There is no doubt that Lord Wellesley's views in the formation of subsidiary alliances, as far as they regarded the princes of India, with whom they were formed, have in every instance been disappointed; and as far as the people are concerned often imperfectly realized; but it is not the less true that the grand aim of his policy has been attained, and that by the command or influence which British India now exercises over all the other states internal war has been put an end

1803.

to throughout the whole of that continent. There may be an occasional disturbance, but it can neither be extensive nor long continued: it cannot deserve the imputation of a state of warfare. That under any circumstances, intestine hostilities are to be prevented, if possible, our author would have been the first to admit; as he is no admirer of military renown: but when it is remembered in what manner, and by what persons, with what an utter disregard of those restraints by which the horrors of war amongst civilized nations are in some degree checked, hostilities in India were carried on, there will remain no doubt that India has gained, upon the whole, important advantages from the scheme of universal pacification which it was Lord Wellesley's policy to establish, and which has now been effected. That it was not sooner accomplished, was in part owing to the different views of his successors and in part to a circumstance politicians do not always sufficiently regard—matters were not sufficiently ripe for so great a change.

It is worthy of remark that at a subsequent period the author changed his opinions materially in regard to the necessity of the war with the Mahrattas, as well as that with Tippoo. The purport of his reasoning in the text is, that both might have been avoided, that there was no real danger to be apprehended from Tippoo, and that our interference in the domestic concerns of the Mahrattas, out of which the war arose, was entirely unnecessary and unadvisable. In his examination before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1832, he says, "all our wars cannot perhaps be with propriety considered wars of necessity, but most of those by which the territories we possess have been obtained, and out of which our subsidiary alliances have grown, have been wars I think of necessity, and not of choice. "For example, the wars with Tippoo and the Mahrattas." Evidence Political, i. p. 10. This is very irreconcileable with the notions of the text, and although more consonant to the fact; it requires perhaps some modification. The immediate necessity of the second war with Tippoo is very questionable; and it may be doubted if the Mahratta war might not have been delayed. In both cases, however, it must be admitted that collision sooner or later was unavoidable; and it was not inconsistent with a prudent policy to have brought on its occurrence as soon as we were prepared for the encounter.—W.

CHAPTER. XIII.

Necessity inferred of curbing Holkar.—Intercourse between Holkar and Sindia renewed.—Governor-General resolves to take the Holkar Dominions, but to give them away to the Peshwa, Sindia, and the Nizam.—Holkar retreats before the Commander-in-Chief, toward the South.—The Commander-in-Chief withdraws the Army into Cantonments, leaving Colonel Monson with a Detachment in advance.—Holkar turns upon Monson.—Monson makes a disastrous Retreat to Agra.—The British Army from Guzerat subdues Holkar's Dominions in Malwa.—Holkar by a Stratagem attacks Delhi.—Brave Defence of Delhi.—The Holkar Dominions in the Deccan subdued.—Defeat of Holkar's Infantry at Deeg.—Rout of his Cavalry at Furruckabad.—The Raja of Bhurtpore, one of the allied Chieftains, joins with Holkar.—Unsuccessful Attack upon the Fortress of Bhurtpore.—Accommodation with the Raja of Bhurtpore.—Disputes with Sindia.—Prospect of a War with Sindia.—Holkar joins the Camp of Sindia.—The British Resident ordered by the Commander-in-Chief to quit the Camp of Sindia.—Sindia endeavours to prevent the Departure of the Resident.—Marquis Wellesley succeeded by Marquis Cornwallis.—Corn-

wallis' View of the State of the Government.—Of Wellesley's System of subsidiary and defensive Alliance.—Cornwallis resolves to avoid a War with Sindia, by yielding every Point in Dispute.—To make Peace with Holkar by restoring all the Territories he had lost.—To dissolve the Connexion of the British Government with the minor Princes on the Mahratta Frontier.—Negotiations between Sindia and the Commander-in-Chief.—Death of Lord Cornwallis.—Sir G. Barlow adheres to the Plans of Lord Cornwallis.—Holkar advances into the Country of the Seiks.—Pursued by Lord Lake.—A fresh Treaty concluded by Sindia—Treaty with Holkar.—Financial Results.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

When the English were freed from the burden and the dangers of the war with Sindia and the Raja of Berar, they began to think of placing a curb on the power of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. Though Holkar had engaged, and upon very advantageous terms, to join with the other chieftains, he had abstained from co-operation in the war against the English; and though he had committed some ravages on a part of the Nizam's territory, toward the beginning of the war; the Governor-General had not held it expedient to treat this offence as a reason for hostilities: Holkar, on the other hand, had been uniformly assured that the English were desirous of preserving with him the relations of peace.

In the month of December, 1803, Holkar, having marched towards the territory of the Raja of Jyenagur, took up a position which threatened the security of this ally of the British state. At the

1804.

same time, he addressed letters to the British Commander-in-Chief, containing assurances of his disposition to cultivate the friendship of the British government. But a letter of his to the Raja of Macherry, suggesting to him inducements to withdraw from the British alliance, was communicated by that Raja to the Commander-in-Chief; further correspondence of a hostile nature was discovered; and intelligence was received of his having murdered three British subjects in his service, on a false charge that one of them had corresponded with the Commander-in-Chief. It appeared imprudent to remove the army of the Commander-in-Chief from the field, till security was obtained against the projects of Holkar.

The determination which hitherto had guided the conduct of the Governor-General, that he would abstain from the dispute in the Holkar family respecting the successor of Tuckojee, still operated in his mind. And he authorized the Commander-in-Chief to conclude an arrangement with Jeswunt Rao, engaging, on the part of the British government, to leave him in the unmolested exercise of his authority, provided he would engage to abstain from all aggression upon the British or their allies.

The Commander-in-Chief addressed a letter to Holkar, dated the 29th of January, 1804, in conformity with the instructions which he had received; inviting him to send vakeels to the British camp for the purpose of effecting the amicable agreement which both parties professed to have in view; but requiring him, as a proof of his friendly intentions, to withdraw his army from its menacing position, and abstain from exactions upon the British allies.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

At the same time the British army advanced to Hindoun, a position which at once commanded the principal roads into the Company's territory, and afforded an easy movement in any direction which the forces of Holkar might be found to pursue. On the 27th of February an answer from that chieftain arrived. It repeated the assurance of his desire to cultivate the friendship of the British government, and expressed his intention to withdraw from his present position, and send a vakeel to the British camp. In the mean time, however, letters were intercepted, addressed by Holkar to subjects and allies of the British government, exciting them to revolt, and stating his design of sending troops to ravage the British territories. The Commander-in-Chief made an amicable reply to his letter; but warned him, at the same time, against the practices in which he had begun to indulge. And on the 16th of March two vakeels from Holkar arrived in the British camp.

They were commissioned to demand; 1. leave to collect the chout according to the custom of his ancestors; 2. certain possessions formerly enjoyed by his family, namely, Etawah, twelve pergunnahs in the Doab, one in Bundelcund, and the country of Hurriana; 3. the guarantee of the country which he then possessed: 4. a treaty similar in terms to that which had been concluded with Sindia. These demands were treated as altogether extravagant; and the vakeels, after receiving a remonstrance on the continuance of their master in his present threatening position, departed from the camp, bearing to him another letter from the Commander-in-Chief.

In this, Holkar was invited to send again a confidential agent, with powers to conclude an arrangement on terms in which the British government would be able to concur. In the mean time, he had addressed a letter to General Wellesley; containing a demand of certain territories, which he said belonged to his family in the Deccan; and intimating that, notwithstanding the greatness of the British power, a war with him would not be without its evils; for "although unable to oppose their artillery in the field, countries of many coss should be overrun, and plundered, and burnt; that they should not have leisure to breathe for a moment, and that calamities would fall on lacs of human beings in continued war by the attacks of his army, which overwhelms like the waves of the sea." An answer, however, to the letter of the Commander-in-Chief was received in the British camp on the 4th of April; still evading either acceptance or rejection of the simple proposition of the British Commander, and urging his pretensions to something like the terms he himself had proposed. That letter drew another from the Commander-in-Chief, applauding the forbearance of the British government, and assuring Holkar that he would best consult his own interest by complying with its demands.[1]

Holkar, though fully aware of the hatred towards him in the bosom of Sindia, was not deterred from

[1] Letter from the Governor-General in council to the Secret Committee, dated 15th June, 1804. Papers, ut supra, printed in 1806, No. 23, p. 263; Notes, ut supra, No. 25, p. 205.—M. Wellesley Dispatches, iv. 48.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

the endeavour of opening a negotiation, or at any rate of giving himself the benefit of an apparent intrigue, with that chieftain. A vakeel of his arrived in the camp of Sindia, on the 5th of February, 1804. The account, which Sindia and his ministers thought proper to render of this event to the British resident in his camp, was liable to suspicion, on the one hand from the extreme duplicity of Mahratta councils, on the other from the extraordinary desire which appeared on the part of Sindia to produce a war between that rival and the British government. They said, that the vakeel had endeavoured to prevail upon Sindia to accommodate his dispute with Holkar, and form a union for the reduction of the British power, the continual augmentation of which could be attended with nothing less than the final destruction of the Mahratta state; but that the answer of Sindia was a positive refusal, on the professed grounds, of the treachery with which Holkar had violated his pledge to the late confederacy, the impossibility of confiding in any engagement into which he might enter, and the resolution of Sindia to adhere to his connexion with the British state. Notwithstanding this supposed reply, a vakeel from Sindia proceeded to the camp of Holkar, on the alleged motive that, unable as he was to resist the arms of that chieftain, it was desirable both to effect an accommodation with him, and to sound his inclinations. According to the representation made to the British Resident, the vakeel was authorized to propose a continuance of the relations of amity and peace, but to threaten

hostilities if depredations were committed on any part of the territory either of Sindia or his dependants.[1]

Sindia's vakeel arrived in Holkar's camp on the 3rd of March. Previous to this time, Holkar had moved, with the main body of his troops, into Ajmere, a country belonging to Sindia. His pretence was devotion; but he levied contributions on the people, and made an attempt, though unsuccessful, to obtain possession of the fort. Notwithstanding a declaration to the British Commander-in-Chief, that he intended to proceed homewards from Ajmere, a portion of his army still remained on the frontier of the Raja of Jypore, and no longer abstained from depredations on his country. The ministers of Sindia made report to the British Resident, respecting the vakeel who had been sent to the camp of Holkar, that he had been received with distinguished ceremony and respect; that he was invited

[1] Letter from Major Malcolm; Papers, ut supra, No. 23, p. 298; Governor-General's Dispatch, ibid. p. 270.—M. This intercourse is thus explained by Grant. Holkar had always intended to engage in hostilities with the British, but had kept aloof in uncertainty of the result of the war, anticipating that Sindia would immediately turn his arms against him if he triumphed over the British, or that if he was defeated, he, Holkar, might come to Sindia's aid with additional credit and influence. As soon as hostilities had terminated he sent a vakeel to Sindia, recommending him to break the treaty and renew the war, but that chieftain was, or pretended to be so exasperated against Holkar, that he immediately communicated the fact to the British authority. Some of his ministers, especially his father-in-law, Sherzee Rao Ghatgay had more confidence in Holkar, and advised Sindia, notwithstanding the communication to the British Resident to dispatch a Vakeel to Holkar's camp, for the purpose, as they gave out, of ascertaining his designs, but in reality to leave open the door of reconciliation, in case the project of Holkar, in whose wisdom and fortune all the Mahrattas began to have great confidence, should prove worthy of regard. Mahr. Hist., 3, 270.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

to a private conference; that Holkar, on this occasion, openly professed his design of making a predatory war upon the British possessions; that, when the vakeel expostulated with him on his proceedings in Ajmere, he apologized, by stating his intention to leave his family with the Raja of Jodepore when he commenced his operations against the English; the refusal of that Raja to join with him, till he put him in possession of the province and fort of Ajmere; and thence his hope, that Sindia would excuse an irregularity, which not inclination, but necessity, in the prosecution of a war involving the independence of them both, had induced him to commit. Of this report, so much alone was fit for belief, as had confirmation from other sources of evidence.

The only matters of fact, which seem to have been distinctly ascertained, were, first, certain trifling depredations at Jypore, less material than those at Aurungabad which had been formerly excused, on the score of a necessity created by troops whom he was unable to maintain; secondly, a disposition to haggle for better terms, in forming a treaty, than the British government were willing to grant; and thirdly, the existence and character of him and his army, to whom predatory warfare was a matter, it was supposed, both of choice and necessity, as the plunder of the Company's territory was the only source of subsistence. On these facts and suppositions, with a strong disposition to believe reports, and to magnify grounds of suspicion, the Governor-General, on the 16th of April, issued orders to the Commander-in-Chief, and

Major-General Wellesley, to commence hostile operations against Holkar, both in the north and in the south.[1]

In his despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 15th of June, 1804, the

[1] Governor-General's Letter, No. 23, ut supra, p. 271: Notes, No. 25, ut supra, p. 208.—M. Holkar's demands and menaces were something more than grounds for suspicion, but a new light has been thrown upon this subject by recent and authentic information. Regulating its proceedings by the rules of European policy, the Indian government imagined that a state of warfare was necessarily to be preceded by a specific declaration. Mahratta policy required no such formality, and must have thought the Governor-General's tardiness the result of either infirmity of purpose or conscious weakness. It is clear that Holkar considered himself to be at war with the English. In the biographical memoirs of Holkar's confederate, Ameer Khan, written from his own dictation, and of which a translation by Mr. Prinsep has been published in Calcutta, he intimates no sort of suspicion that peace subsisted between Holkar and the English from the commencement of hostilities against Sindia, with whom he was in alliance, and therefore a party in the contest. Ameer Khan relates that as soon as Sindia and the Raja of Berar heard that the Peshwa had come to terms with the English, they sent a confidential messenger to Holkar, to say that as Bajee Rao had called in the English, and brought their army into the field, and Hindoostan could no longer be deemed the safe possession of their nation, all private quarrels should be buried in oblivion, and every true Mahratta uniting in heart and hand, and in word and deed, ought to endeavour to drive the English out of the country: that they who were the chiefs of the nation should agree, therefore, mutually to assist one another at present, and to settle their private disputes and animosities as might be agreed upon afterwards. Holkar consulted Ameer Khan on the subject, by whose advice certain conditions were proposed to the allied chiefs, to which they acceded, and in consequence Ameer Khan, with a select body of Holkar's troops, was on his march to join the confederates when the news of the battle of Assye arrested his progress, and he returned to Holkar. This demonstration of which there can be no doubt, as it is related by Ameer Khan himself, does not seem to have been known to the English authorities. Again, after the battle of Laswaree, whilst yet Holkar was looked upon as neutral, he wrote to Ameer Khan with many adjurations that he had made up his mind to enter the field against General Lake, and he therefore commanded the Ameer to join him as soon as possible. Memoirs of Mohammed Ameer Khan, translated from the Persian by H. T. Prinsep, Esq., Calcutta, 1832.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

Governor-General says: "Jeswunt Rao Holkar being justly considered as an adventurer, and as the *usurper* of the *rights* of his brother Cashee Rao Holkar—consistently with the principles of justice, no arrangement could be proposed between the British government and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, involving the formal sanction of the British government to that chieftain's *usurpation*, and to the exclusion of Cashee Rao Holkar from *his hereditary dominions*."[1] Yet these very dominions, thus declared to belong to Cashee Rao, the Governor-General had already resolved, without a shadow of complaint against Cashee Rao, to take, and give away to other persons. In his instructions to the British Resident in the Camp of Sindia, dated the 16th of April, 1804, he says; "His Excellency thinks it may be useful to you to be apprized, that it is not his intention, in the event of the reduction of Holkar's power, to take any share of the possessions of the Holkar family for the Company. Chandore, and its dependencies and vicinity, will probably be given to the Peshwa; and the other possessions of Holkar, situated to the south of the Godavery, to the Subahdar of the Deccan: all the remainder of the possessions of Holkar will accrue to Sindia, provided he shall exert himself in the reduction of Jeswunt Rao Holkar." In lieu of "his hereditary dominions," which it was not pretended that he had done any thing to forfeit to the British government, "it will be necessary," says the Governor-General in a subsequent para-

[1] No. 23, p. 264.

graph, "to make *some* provision for Cashee Rao, and for such of the legitimate branches of the family as may not be concerned in the violation of the public peace, or in the crimes of Jeswunt Rao Holkar." [1]

The motive which led the Governor-General to decline a portion of the territory of Holkar for the Company, immediately after having taken for it so great a portion from Sindia; and to add so largely to the dominions of Sindia, immediately after having so greatly reduced them, is somewhat mysterious, if viewed through the single medium of national good; but is sufficiently intelligible, if we either suppose, that he already condemned the policy of his former measures, and thought an opposite conduct very likely to pass without observation; or, that, still approving the former policy, he yet regarded escape from the imputation of making war from the love of conquest, as a greater good, in the present instance, than the territory declined.[2]

Sindia, we are told, was highly delighted, as well he might be, with the announcement of the intention of the Governor-General, both to commence hostilities upon Holkar, and to make such a division of the territory of the family. He promised to promote the war with his utmost exertions.

When Major-General Wellesley received instructions to begin hostilities, the Deccan was labouring

[1] Letters, ut supra, Ibid. p. 303, 304.—M. Dispatches, 4, 99, 369.—W.

[2] It was strictly a defensive war, not one engaged in for purposes of conquest, and the determination to divide the territory amongst the dependent chiefs was a demonstration of disinterestedness which could not fail to have a favourable effect on native opinion. In giving up the territory also, little else was done than restoring to each his own.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

under a scarcity approaching to famine. The principal possessions held for the benefit of Holkar in that quarter of India were—the fort and territory of Chandore, about 130 miles north of Poona; the fort and territory of Dhoorb, about twenty miles west by north from Chandore, on the same range of hills; Galna, a hill-fort thirty-five miles north-north east of Chandore, and eighty-five miles from Aurungabad; some territory in Candeish; and a few districts intermixed with those of the Nizam. With the capture of the fortresses of Chandore and Galna, these territories would be wholly subdued. But to conduct the operations of an army, in a country totally destitute of forage and provisions, appeared to General Wellesley so hazardous, that he represented it as almost impossible for him to advance against Chandore till the commencement of the rains. In the mean time, he augmented the force in Guzerat by three battalions of native infantry, and instructed Colonel Murray, the commanding officer, to march towards the territories of Holkar in Malwa, and, either by meeting and engaging his army, or acting against his country, to accelerate, as much as possible, his destruction.[1]

During the negotiation with Holkar, the Commander-in-Chief had advanced slowly toward the territory of the Raja of Jypore. A detachment of considerable strength, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ball, had occupied a position near

[1] The documents relative to the correspondence and negotiations with Holkar, previous to the commencement of hostilities, were printed by an order of the House of Commons, under date, 11th of February, 1805.

Canore, about ninety miles south-west of Delhi, to guard in that direction the Company's frontier. To protect and encourage the Raja of Jypore, whose territory Holkar, now returned from Ajmere, began to ravage, occupying a position which even threatened his capital, General Lake sent forward a detachment of three battalions of native infantry, under the command of the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Monson, on the 18th of April. This detachment arrived in the vicinity of Jypore on the 21st. On the morning of the 23rd, Holkar decamped from his position, and began his march to the southward with great precipitation. Some parties of Hindustanee horse, under European officers, which the General had detached for the purpose of observing the motions of Holkar, and harassing his march, followed him in his retreat. A halt of two days, on the part of Holkar, induced the British commander, suspecting a feint, to advance with the army; while Monson, with his detachment, was directed to precede the main body, as rapidly as possible. On the approach of the British forces, Holkar resumed his retreat, which he continued with great precipitation, till he arrived in the vicinity of Kotah. Here he had so far preceded the British troops, that he could halt without fear of an immediate attack. The Hindustanee horse, who had hung upon his rear, described his army as being in the greatest distress, the country remaining nearly desolate from its former ravages. A letter without date was received by the Commander-in-Chief, from Holkar, on the 8th of May, offering to send, according to his desire, a person duly authorized "to settle every thing amicably." The Commander-in-Chief replied,

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

"When I wrote you, formerly, that vakeels might be sent to confirm a friendship, conditions were specified, which you have not any way fulfilled; but have acted directly contrary to them. This has forced the British government to concert, with its allies, the necessary measures for subverting a power, equally inimical to all. This has been resolved upon. You will perceive that I cannot now enter into any bonds of amity with you, without consulting the allies of the British government." The fort of Rampoora, which the British army were now approaching, was the grand protection of the northern possessions of Holkar. For the attack of this place, a detachment was formed, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Don. Having encamped before the place, this officer adopted the plan of entering the fort by blowing open the gates. He advanced to the assault, a little before day-break, on the morning of the 16th of May; and as a well-concerted plan was well executed, all resistance was speedily overcome, and the place was taken with inconsiderable loss.

The distance which Holkar had gained by his rapid flight, the improbability of forcing him to action, or of his returning to the upper provinces, presented to the mind of the Commander-in-Chief the inexpediency of retaining the advanced position, which he now occupied, with the main body of his army. Only the British troops in Guzerat, in concert with those of Sindia, appeared capable, during the present season, of acting with advantage upon the territories of Holkar. He accordingly withdrew the army into cantonments within the British dominions, leaving Colonel Monson with injunctions to

make such a disposition of his force as would preclude, in that direction, any sort of danger from Holkar's return.[1]

On the 21st of May, a body of predatory horse, estimated at five thousand, made an incursion into the province of Bundelcund, where seven companies of sepoys, a troop of native cavalry, and the park of artillery, detached, under the command of Captain Smith, from the main body of the troops in that province, were employed in the reduction of a fort, about five miles distant from Kooch. On the morning of the 22nd, this body of horse succeeded in cutting off a part of the British detachment which was posted in the pettah of the fort, and compelled the whole to retreat, with the loss of two howitzers, two twelve-pounders, one six-pounder, and all the tumbrils belonging to the park. The same party made an attempt afterwards upon the town of Calpee, and aimed at crossing the Jumna, but were repulsed with loss; and having afterwards sustained a defeat near Kooch, evacuated the province. The refractory Bundela chiefs still afforded considerable employment to the British army.[2]

[1] See the Dispatch of the Governor-General, ut supra, in Papers, No. 23; and Notes, ut supra, No. 25.

[2] Calcutta Gazettes, Papers, ut supra, No. 25, p. 229.—M. The party surprised at Mulaya near Koonch consisted of two companies of Sepoys, and one of European artillery, with four European officers. It was entirely cut to pieces by the enemy. According to Ameer Khan's account of this and the ensuing operations which were executed by his troops, Kalpee was plundered, after the defeat of a small detachment, and capture of the officer commanding it, who, however, was liberated without ransom. On his retreat from the Jumna in consequence of not finding a ford, the Ameer fell in with another party under Captain Jones, was successfully resisted, and obliged to retreat, and his whole party was subsequently broken, and dispersed in an affair with Colonel Shepherd, near Koonch, on the 24th

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

After the departure of General Lake, Monson, now Brigadier-General, continued to make some movements in advance, and on the 1st of July, in the height of the rains, was encamped at Soonara; within twenty coss of the camp of Holkar, containing the whole of his cavalry, brigades, and guns. On the evening of that day, a party marched from the British detachment, towards the fort of Hinglais-Ghur, and halted within a mile of the fort, at half-past ten on the following morning. The troops, having rested three hours, arrived at the destined points of attack, at half an hour after two. As soon as they were discovered, a heavy cannonade began from the fort; but it was completely silenced, by the great expertness of the British artillery, in the space of an hour; when the men escaladed the walls, and took possession, without difficulty. It was a fortress of great natural strength, and the gallantry and skill with which it was attacked, form one of the brilliant incidents of the war. The Commander-in-Chief set a high value on this acquisition; which, he thought, would secure the supplies of Monson if he advanced to the support of the army from Guzerat, and afford protection to the people of the surrounding districts, who appeared to be well inclined to the British cause.[1]

On the 7th of July, Monson received intelligence, that Holkar, who, since his retreat before the Commander-in-Chief, had occupied a position in Malwa,

June, 1804. Memoirs of Ameer Khan, 207. Thorn, War in India, 344. Wellesley Dispatches, 4, 72.—W.

[1] Dispatches from the Commander-in-Chief, and General Monson; Papers, ut supra, No. 25, p. 233.

having the Chumbul river between himself and the British detachment, had crossed that river with the whole of his army and guns. The force under Monson consisted of five battalions of sepoys, with artillery in proportion; and two bodies of irregular horse, about three thousand strong, the one British, under Lieutenant Lucan, the other a detachment sent by Sindia, commanded by a leader named Bappoojee Sindia. Monson was now advanced about fifty miles beyond the Mokundra pass, where he had expected to procure supplies, and to communicate with Colonel Murray, who was advancing from Guzerat towards Ougein. He made his first movement toward the spot where Holkar crossed the river, in the hope of being able to attack him, with advantage, before his troops recovered from the confusion which the passage of the river would be sure to produce. Afterwards, however, reflecting, that he had only two days' grain in his camp, that part of his corps was detached to bring up grain, that one battalion of it was on the march to join him from Hinglais-Ghur, and that the enemy's cavalry was very numerous; expecting, also, to be joined by an escort, with treasure, for the use of his detachment; and having received accounts from Colonel Murray of his intention to fall back on the Myhie river, he determined to retire to the Mokundra pass.[1] The whole of the baggage and stores was sent off to Soonarah, at four in the morning of the 8th. Monson remained on the ground of encampment till half-past nine, with his detachment

[1] Monson's determination to retreat is affirmed by Ameer Khan to have been adopted by the treacherous advice of Bapoojee Sindia, who was in secret understanding with Jeswunt Rao. Memoirs, 215.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

formed in order of battle. No enemy having appeared, he now commenced his march; leaving the irregular cavalry, with orders to follow in half an hour, and afford the earliest information of the enemy's motions. The detachment had marched six coss, when intelligence was received that the irregular cavalry, thus remaining behind, had been attacked and defeated by Holkar's horse; and that Lieutenant Lucan, and several other officers, were prisoners.[1] The detachment continued its march, and, next day about noon, reached, unmolested, the Mokundra pass. On the morning of the 10th, a large body of the enemy's cavalry appeared, and continually increased in numbers till noon the following day; when Holkar summoned the detachment to surrender their arms. A refusal being returned, he divided his force into three bodies, and made a vigorous attack on the front and flanks of the British corps. The position and steadiness of the troops enabled them to sustain reiterated onsets, persevered in till night, when Holkar drew off to a distance of two coss; and being joined by his infantry and guns, was expected to renew his attacks on the following morning. Monson, not regarding his position as tenable, and fearing lest the enemy should get in his rear, adopted the resolution of retiring to Kotah. Arrived at this place, on the morning of the 12th, after two marches, rendered excessively harassing by the rain, which fell in torrents, and the enemy who pursued them; the Raja refused to

[1] Lucan was deserted by most of the horse he commanded, was wounded and taken prisoner, and died at Kotah. Bapoojee with his cavalry fled upon Holkar's first appearance, and afterwards joined him. Memoirs, 215, Note.—W

admit them, and professed his inability to furnish any supplies. As the troops were suffering by want of provisions, the decision of Monson was, to advance to the ghaut or ford, of the Gaumus Nuddi, only seven miles off.[1] But the rain had fallen with great violence, since the 10th, and the soil was soft. The troops were unable, therefore, to reach the rivulet, till the morning of the 13th, when it was found impassable. They halted on the 14th, to procure a supply of grain from a neighbouring village; and attempted, on the 15th, to continue the march; but it was found impossible to proceed with the guns. In hopes of an abatement of the rain, they made another halt. It rained during the whole of the night of the 15th; and, next morning, the guns had sunk so deep in the mud, as not to be extricable. The camp was without provisions; and all the neighbouring villages were exhausted. The detachment was under an absolute necessity to proceed: Monson was therefore obliged to spike and leave the guns, sending injunctions to the Raja of Boondee to extricate, and remove them to a place of security. The country was so completely overflowed, that the troops could hardly march. The Chumbelee rivulet, which they reached on the 17th, was not fordable;

[1] The Rana of Kotah, Zalim Sing, always denied his having refused the detachment food, and said he had offered it an asylum without the walls. He could scarcely with a due regard to his own safety have received them into his fortress, and as it was, he was compelled to pay Holkar a fine of ten lacs of rupees for his equivocal conduct. Mahr. Hist., iii., 260. Malcolm's Central India, i., 499. Memoir of Ameer Khan, 217. Lord Lake also writes, Zaulim Sing, of Kotah, has acted uncommonly well, and proved himself a staunch friend to our government: he will in all probability suffer most severely from it, particularly if Colonel Monson should quit his country. Dispatches, iv. 179.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

on the 18th, the European artillerymen were crossed over on elephants, and sent on to Rampoora; on the 19th, the rivulet continued to swell; corn, with great difficulty, and some danger, was procured for two days; on the evening of the 21st, the camp of a body of the enemy's horse was successfully beaten up; on the 23rd and 24th, a few rafts having been procured, three battalions of the detachment were moved across; the remainder, about seven hundred men, were attacked by a party of the enemy's horse, but able to repel them. On the morning of the 25th, after the whole of the detachment had been got over, not without loss, they moved in different corps, assailed as they passed, by the hill-people and banditti, towards Rampoora, at which some of them arrived on the 27th, others not till the 29th.

At Rampoora, Monson was joined by two battalions of sepoys, a body of irregular horse, four six-pounders, two howitzers, and a supply of grain, sent to his relief from Agra, by the Commander-in-Chief, as soon as he received intelligence of the disasters of the detachment. As the country, however, was destitute of provisions, as Holkar was advancing in considerable force, as Monson expected to be joined at Khoosul-Ghur by six battalions and twenty-one guns, under Sudasheo Bhao Bukshee, in the service of Sindia, and then to obtain provisions which would enable him to keep the field, he resolved to continue his march to that place, leaving a sufficient garrison for the protection of Rampoora.

He reached the river Bannas about daybreak on the 22nd of August. It was not fordable. Three

boats were found, with which one of the battalions was transported, for the purpose of conducting the treasure to Khoosul-Ghur. The next morning the cavalry of the enemy pitched their camp about four miles distant from the British detachment. On the morning of the 24th, the river having fallen, Monson began to transport his baggage. The greater part of the baggage, and four battalions, had crossed, and General Monson, with the remaining battalion and the piquets of the rest was preparing to follow, as soon as the remainder of the baggage and the people of the camp had effected their passage, when the enemy, a great number of whose cavalry had already passed to the right and the left of the British position, brought up their infantry and guns, and opened a heavy cannonade on the small body of the English that still remained on that side of the river. Monson led them directly to the charge, and they succeeded in taking some guns; but were soon overpowered by excess of numbers, and with great difficulty effected their retreat, covered by the fire of one of the battalions on the opposite side, which advanced to the bank of the river to protect them. The enemy prosecuted their advantage, and Monson was obliged to abandon his baggage, and fly to Khoosul-Ghur, which he reached on the night of the 25th of August. On the morning of the 26th, the enemy's cavalry encamped around him in separate bodies. At the same time a correspondence was detected between some of the native officers and the enemy; and though decisive measures to check the mischief were immediately adopted, two

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

companies of infantry, and a large proportion of the irregular cavalry, made their escape.[1] On the same day Monson quitted the fort, having spiked the last remaining howitzer; and, with the men in an oblong square, began to proceed. During the night, and the following day, the enemy's cavalry, supported by guns, attempted several times, but without success, to penetrate the detachment; who, on the night of the 27th, took possession of the ruined fort of Hindown, and next day, at noon, continued their retreat towards Agra. They had no sooner cleared the ravines near Hindown, than a desperate charge, in three separate bodies, was made upon them by the enemy's horse. The sepoys had sufficient discipline to reserve their fire till the enemy had almost come up to the bayonet. It was then given with effect; and the enemy immediately turned, and fled in all directions. Having reached the Biana pass, about sunset on the 28th, when the troops were almost exhausted with hunger and fatigue, Monson halted, with a view to pass the night at the entrance. But the enemy's guns approached, and began a galling fire. He was therefore obliged to prosecute his retreat. The night was dark, the camp-followers and baggage mixed with the line, the troops were thrown into confusion, order could no more be restored, and the different corps concluded their retreat in great disorder, the last of them reaching Agra on the 31st of August. The enemy followed in strag-

[1] Sindia's troops stationed at Khooshul-Ghur, and intended to co-operate with the British, endeavoured to plunder the town, and being opposed by the British detachment, were in open hostility.—W.

gling parties, for purposes of plunder, as far as Futty-poor, but made no united attack after that on the night of the 25th.[1]

During the retreat of his detachment, Colonel Murray, with the division of the British army from Guzerat, advanced into the heart of the Holkar dominions; and on the 24th of August took possession of the capital, Indore. The commander of the troops which had been left for its protection retired without opposition.[2]

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, No. 25, pp. 229—339. Dispatches, iv, 199.

[2] Printed papers, ut supra, p. 240.—M. It is observed of Colonel Monson by Lord Lake (Dispatches iv, 245,) that it is extraordinary, "that a man brave as a lion should have no judgment or reflection." There is, perhaps, nothing very extraordinary in the combination of courage with lack of judgment, and it must be suspected there was want of judgment in this disastrous retreat. At the same time, it is clear that all the fault was not Monson's, that very much of it was Murray's, and that both had been placed in an awkward position, by those who planned their operations. Each was advanced to a great distance from effective support, with a force insufficient to encounter the enemy by whom they were separated, and whose strength was greatly and fatally miscalculated by the Commander-in-Chief (Letter to Lord Wellesley, July 1st, 1805. Dispatches, v., 283). Lord Lake was informed, and he believed the information, that Holkar's resources were reduced to the lowest ebb, and that his army was almost annihilated. He estimated the force to be left with Colonel Monson by a proportionate scale, and the estimate proved erroneous. According to Lord Lake, however, Monson advanced considerably beyond the point at which he had been directed to remain, the passes of Boondee and Lakery in the mountains south of Rampoora, by which the entrance from Malwa into Bundelcund was secured. It was the Commander-in-Chief's intention that the detachment should have remained in this position until the termination of the rainy season, when either alone, or reinforced, as might have been necessary, it could have advanced into Malwa.

Colonel Monson, however, tempted by the prospect of some unimportant advantage, moved on first to Kotah, and then to the Mokundra pass, which he described, in reply to Lord Lake's disapprobation of his movement, as equally adapted to secure the object proposed, and thus, according to Lord Lake's statement, persuaded him against his own opinions to acquiesce in the advance so far. When here, however, Monson thought it would be an advantage to occupy Hinglaiz-Ghur, fifty miles beyond the pass, and accord-

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

Upon the escape of Monson to Agra, Holkar advanced with the whole of his army to Muttra,

ingly extended his forward movement. After taking the fortress he learned that Holkar was about to cross the Chumbul, and wrote to Lord Lake to say that he intended to attack the Mahrattas whilst engaged in the passage. In this he might have succeeded, but he changed his mind and fell back. In the Commander-in-Chief's opinion this was another mistake. As an equally favourable opportunity for an attack could not occur, the omission should have been repaired by an attack under the most favourable circumstances that could be obtained. The numbers of Monson's force were certainly inferior to those of the enemy, but he had on his side discipline, approved valour, and the choice of position. A bold effort was also necessary to extricate him from his situation, and to avoid the disgrace and misfortunes inseparable from a rapid retreat. The retreat was, however, continued to Mokundra with the declared intention of making a stand there, but here again Monson failed in resolution, and after a short halt resumed his march. The losses suffered from this until his arrival at Rampoora were owing rather to the climate than to the enemy. Colonel Monson reached Rampoora on the 27th July, and did not move again till the 22nd August. This delay Lord Lake observes, in his dispatches to Lord Wellesley, was fatal. It was in some measure his own work. He says, "when I was informed that the detachment joined by the reinforcement was at Rampoora, I transmitted instructions to Colonel Monson to make a stand at that place if such measure appeared to him practicable." This is rather a questionable account of the transaction. The reinforcement did not join till the 14th of August. Lord Lake could not have heard of the junction in much less than a week afterwards, and his instructions to remain, if practicable, must have met Monson on the march towards Agra. Long before this, however, Lord Lake had sent to Monson orders to suspend his retreat. On the 28th of June, Monson writes to Colonel Don in the rear; "The Commander-in-Chief positively forbids me falling back, even further than Kotah, therefore, we must (the whole) remain at Rampoora until I hear further from him." Memoir of Colonel Don. East India Military Calendar, ii, 548. Lord Lake, therefore, seems to have been the cause of Colonel Monson's protracted stay at Rampoora, although it does not excuse his want of decision in hesitating at once to quit a place where it was impossible to make a stand, or his want of judgment in eventually leaving it if it was defensible. Every day's delay tended to render the country still more impassable at such a season; and undoubtedly as Monson did finally think it necessary to leave Rampoora, he should have quitted it with the least possible delay. Besides the other obvious advantages of such expedition, he would have shortened the distance between him and his reinforcements, they would have encountered him earlier, and in better organization, and the whole would probably have effected their return to the Company's

situated on the right bank of the Jumna, about thirty miles from Agra; and took possession of the place. The Commander-in-Chief marched from Cawnpore on the 3rd, arrived at Agra on the 22nd of September, and proceeded immediately to Secundra, where he assembled the whole of the army under his personal command. On the 1st of October, he marched towards Muttra, from which, as he advanced, Holkar retired, and planned an important stratagem. Leaving his cavalry to engage the attention of the British Commander, which they effectually did, he secretly despatched his infantry and guns, for the execution of his destined exploit. On the night of

territories in good order, and with little comparative dishonour or loss. A full investigation of the circumstances of the retreat was promised to the Court of Directors (Dispatches, iv., 343), but it does not appear that any other explanation was attempted than that furnished after the close of the campaign by Lord Lake, and referred to above (Dispatches, v., 283). It is clear from this account, that Monson was in insufficient strength, but it is also evident that he advanced with great imprudence, and with very imperfect information, and that when he judged it prudent to retreat, (and with his force, without any Europeans, and without regular cavalry, it would have been very hazardous to have done any thing else), he displayed great want of singleness and steadiness of purpose, by which he lost invaluable time, and exposed his troops to destruction. The consequences were most disastrous. The actual loss, severe as it was, was the least of its evils. It impressed all India with the belief that Holkar was able to resist, and likely to overcome the power of the English; it gave fresh life to hostile hopes, and activity to dangerous intrigues; it encouraged Sindia and the Bhonsla to pursue measures which, but for the prudent forbearance of the Governor-General, would again have brought their armies into the field, and it tempted the Raja of Bhurtpore to enter into a confederacy with Holkar, and was thus productive of all the disgrace and loss consequent upon the siege of that fortress. Had not Monson's detachment been exposed to destruction, Holkar must have been exterminated in the early part of the ensuing campaign, or in the end of 1804, and an immense saving of treasure and life would have been effected, whilst all the political advantages expected from the war, and which in impatience of its protracted continuance were thrown away by Lord Wellesley's successors, would, in all probability, have been secured.—W.

1804.

the 6th, he encamped with his cavalry about four miles in front of the British position. Before daylight next morning General Lake moved out to surprise him. The General formed his army into three divisions; leaving the park, and an adequate force, for the protection of the camp; but Holkar was apprized of his approach, and retired too promptly to permit an attack. Early on the morning of the 8th, the infantry of that chieftain appeared before Delhi, and immediately opened a heavy cannonade. The garrison was small, consisting entirely of sepoys, and a small corps of irregular infantry; the place was extremely extensive; and the fortifications were in a ruinous state. Every thing promised a successful enterprisc.

From the first notice of the enemy's approach in that direction, the most judicious precautions had been taken, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonels Ochterlony and Burn, the first acting as resident in the city, the second commandant of the troops, to place the city in the bcst state of defence which circumstances would permit. During the 8th, the distance from which the enemy fired prevented much execution. On the 9th, however, having erected a battery, within breaching distance, they demolished a part of the wall, and would have quickly effccted a brcach; when a sally was planned to check their progress. Two hundred sepoys, and 150 of the irregular corps, under the command of Licutenant Rose, performed the exploit with great gallantry; took possession of the enemy's battery; spiked their guns; and threw them into so much confusion, that they fired upon their own people,

who, flying from the assailing party, were mistaken for British troops. The principal operations from this time were carried on under cover of extensive gardens and adjoining ruins on the southern face of the fort; and they soon made a breach in the curtain between two of the gates. Measures which were completed by the evening of the 12th, to preclude communication between the breach and the town, prevented their profiting by that advantage. But, on the 13th, appearances indicated the intention of a very serious attack. At daybreak on the 14th, the guns of the enemy opened in every direction. A large body of infantry advanced under cover of this cannonade, preceded by ladders, to the Lahore gate. They were received, however, with so much steadiness and gallantry, that they were driven back, leaving their ladders with considerable confusion, and considerable loss. Inactive to a great degree, during the rest of the day, they made a show towards evening of drawing some guns to another of the gates; but took advantage of the night; and in the morning their rear guard of cavalry at a distance was all that could be seen. As the number of the men, by whom Delhi was defended, was too small to admit of regular reliefs, or to make it safe for them to undress; provisions and sweetmeats were served out to them daily at the expense of government, "which," according to the information of Colonel Ochterlony, "had the best effect upon their spirits. That officer concludes his report with the following merited eulogium: "The fatigue suffered by both officers and men could be exceeded by nothing but the cheerfulness and patience with which it was

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

endured; and it cannot but reflect the greatest honour on the discipline, courage, and fortitude of British troops, in the eyes of all Hindustan, to observe, that, with a small force, they sustained a siege of nine days, repelled an assault, and defended a city ten miles in circumference, and which had ever, heretofore, been given up at the first appearance of an enemy at its gates,"[1]

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, p. 233, 243—248.—M. The defence of Delhi only wants an Orme to form a worthy pendant to that of Arcot by Clive. A city of great extent, containing a mixed population, upon whose fidelity no reliance could be placed, and enclosed by walls which, never intended for military protection, were in a dilapidated condition, was besieged by a force of about 20,000 men, with above 100 pieces of cannon, and defended by scarcely more than 800 men, with eleven guns. The troops employed in the defence consisted of the 2nd battalion of the 14th, and four companies of the 17th native infantry, two weak battalions which had come over from Sindia in the preceding war, and three battalions of Nejeebs or irregular infantry. These last had mutinied on the approach of the enemy, but the mutiny was immediately suppressed by vigorous measures, the ringleaders were secured, a native court-martial was held upon them, nine were severely flogged, and two blown away from the muzzles of the guns. Little confidence could therefore be placed in this corps, but they behaved well. A body of irregular horse deserted to the enemy. One battalion of native infantry, the 2nd of the 4th, was stationed in Selim-Gurh, the fort and palace, as a guard to the family of the Mogul, some of the members of which had been detected in a correspondence with Holkar. So little did Lord Lake anticipate the possibility of Delhi being defended by such disproportionate forces, that he had instructed the Resident to withdraw all the regular troops into the fort for the protection of the person of Shah Alem and that of the royal family, leaving for the defence of the city such irregulars as might have been entertained. The Resident, Lieut.-Col. Ochterlony, who had made such preparation as the time permitted for the defence of the city, acting under these instructions, directed the Commandant, Colonel Burn, to retire with his detachment into the city, and take up the ground lately occupied by the 2nd battalion, 4th regiment, for the night, (of the 7th November,) placing sentries at the gates; evidently intending to withdraw the whole into the fort. Considering, however, that if the city were left undefended it would become the scene of indiscriminate tumult and plunder, and that its abandonment without a struggle would be a discredit to the British arms and a moral triumph for the enemy: trusting, also, to be able finally, if compelled, to effect his retreat into the citadel, Colonel Burn determined, with the means at his disposal, to

About this period it was, that the Governor-General made his final arrangement respecting the maintenance and condition of Shah Aulum and his family. Over the city of Delhi, and a small portion of surrounding territory, a sort of nominal sovereignty was reserved to the Emperor. The whole was, indeed, to remain under the charge of the British Resident; but the revenues would be collected, and justice administered, in the name of the Mogul. Beside the produce of this territory, of which the Emperor would appoint a dewan, and other officers, to inspect the collection, and ensure the application to his use, a sum of 90,000 rupees would be issued from the treasury of the Resident at Delhi, for the expenses of himself and his family. But "in extending," says the Governor-General, "to the royal family the benefits of the British protection, no obligation was imposed upon us, to consider the rights and claims of his Majesty Shah Aulum as Emperor of Hindustan; and the Governor-General has deemed it equally unnecessary and inexpedient, to combine with the intended provision for his Majesty and his household, the consideration of any question connected with the future exercise of the Imperial prerogative and authority."[1]

Towards the end of June, the state of the coun-

defend, as long as he could, the city from the enemy. This bold as well as prudent resolve was entirely concurred in by his officers, and the Resident ably and zealously co-operated in its execution. The result reflected the highest honour upon the defenders, and restored the reputation of the British arms. Oral information; Thorn's War in India; Memoir of Major General William Burn; East India Military Calendar, ii. 497.—W.

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, No. 23, p. 149.—M. Dispatches, iv. 237, 542, 553.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

try at that time rendering military operations impracticable in the Deccan, Major-General Wellesley was called to Calcutta, to assist in the deliberation on certain military and economical plans; and surrendered the general powers, military and civil, with which he was invested. Before his departure, a portion of the troops in the field were made to return to Fort St. George and Bombay; leaving disposeable, in the Deccan, two regiments of European infantry, four regiments of native cavalry, and thirteen battalions of sepoys. The principal part of this force, four regiments of native cavalry, two regiments of European infantry, six battalions of sepoys, with a battering train, and the common proportion of artillery and pioneers, were directed to assemble for active operations at Aurungabad, under the general command of Lieutenant-Colonel Wallace. Of the remaining seven battalions of sepoys, six were ordered to remain as a reserve; four at Poona, and two at Hyderabad: and one was required as a garrison at Ahmednuggur.[1]

Having completed his arrangements for action, Colonel Wallace marched from Foorkabad on the 29th of September; and reached Chandore on the 8th of October. On the same day he detached a battalion with two 12-pounders, against a small fort, called Laussoolgaum, garrisoned by Holkar, and distant about twelve miles. The battalion met with a desperate resistance, and lost its commander. A reinforcement was sent during the night, and the place was stormed the following morning. Wallace took

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, No. 25, p. 209.

possession, without resistance, of the pettah of Chandore on the evening of the 8th; on the 10th he had carried his approaches within three or four hundred yards of the gate of the fort, when the Kelledar, or governor, sent overtures of capitulation. The terms, permitting the garrison to depart with their private effects, were agreed upon, on the night of the 11th, and at ten on the morning of the 12th, the British troops were placed in possession of the fort. It was a place of great strength, being quite inaccessible at every part but the gate-way; and of considerable importance, as commanding one of the best passes in the range of hills where it stands. The fort of Dhoorb surrendered to a detachment on the 14th; the forts of Anchella, Jeewunta, and some minor posts, on the same range of hills, were evacuated; and Colonel Wallace, leaving a garrison in Chandore, began his march to Galna on the 17th. He arrrived on the 21st; took possession of the pettah on the following morning; on the 25th two practicable breaches were made in the walls; and the storming parties were on the point of advancing, when the garrison offered to surrender. The reduction of Galna yielded possession of all the territories of Holkar in the Deccan. Of those in Malwa the conquest was already completed, by Colonel Murray's detachment.[1]

The Commander-in-Chief, as soon as he had completed his supplies at Muttra, marched towards Delhi, where he arrived on the 17th of October, two days after the enemy's retreat. Lieutenant-Colonel Burn,

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, p. 250, 251, 266, 267.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

who had been recalled from Sehaurunpore to the defence of Delhi, crossed the Jumna, on his return to his former station, with one battalion of sepoys and some nujeebs, on the 26th of October. On the 29th, Holkar crossed with his cavalry, between Paniput and Delhi, and advanced upon this detachment, which he overtook at Saumlee, on the following day. Colonel Burn encamped his small party in a square, which towards evening was completely surrounded. At four the next morning he began to move. The enemy, having posted themselves on the road to Sehaurunpore, expecting the detachment to proceed in that direction, enabled Colonel Burn to reach, without molestation, a small Gurrie, bordering on the city. Finding the minds of the men admirably disposed, he resolved to defend himself in the Gurrie till re-inforcement should arrive, or even to fight back his way to Delhi. All attempts having failed for the collection of grain, and the troops having suffered great privations, he had come to the resolution, on the 1st of November, of fighting his way to Bhaugput, on the following night; but at this time he received intelligence of the march of the Commander-in-Chief, and was induced to wait for his approach.

On the 31st of October, that General, taking the reserve, his three regiments of dragoons, three regiments of native cavalry, and the mounted artillery, crossed the Jumna, to pursue the cavalry of Holkar. At the same time Major-General Frazer, with the main body of the infantry, two regiments of native cavalry, and the park of artillery, was directed to move upon the infantry and artillery of Holkar, which

had reached the neighbourhood of Deeg, on the right bank of the Jumna. The object of this double movement was, to force both the cavalry and the infantry of Holkar to risk an action with the British troops, or to make him fly from Hindustan, under circumstances of so much ignominy and distress, as would have a disastrous effect upon the reputation of his cause.

General Lake arrived at Bhaugput on the 1st of Novemher. On the second he performed a march of more than twenty-eight miles, and reached Kondellah. On the 3rd he arrived at Saumlee, from which the enemy had decamped early in the morning.

Major-General Frazer marched from Delhi on the 5th of November, and arrived at Goburdun on the 12th, a place within three coss of the fort of Deeg. His force consisted of two regiments of native cavalry, his Majesty's 76th regiment, the Company's European regiments, six battalions of sepoys, and the park of artillery, in all about six thousand men. The force of the enemy was understood to amount to twenty-four battalions of infantry, a large body of horse, and 160 pieces of ordnance; strongly encamped, with their right upon Deeg, and a large jeel of water covering the whole of their front.

As the hour was late, and the General had little information of the enemy's position, he delayed the attack till morning. Having made his arrangements for the security of the camp, he marched with the army in two brigades at three o'clock in the morning; making a circuit round the water to the left, to enable him to come upon the right flank of the enemy. A little after day-break, the army was formed, in

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

two lines; and attacked, and carried a large village on the enemy's flank. It then descended the hill, and charged the enemy's advanced party, under a heavy discharge of round, grape, and chain, from their guns, which they abandoned as the British army came up. General Frazer, whose gallantry animated every man in the field, was wounded, and obliged to be carried from the battle, when the command devolved upon General Monson. The enemy retired to fresh batteries as the British advanced. The whole of the batteries were carried for upwards of two miles, till the enemy were driven close to the walls of the fort. One body of them, drawn up to the eastward of the lower end of the lake, still retained a position, whence they had annoyed the British with a very destructive fire. Seeing the British troops, under cover of a fire from several pieces of cannon, moving round to their left, they made a precipitate retreat into the lake, where many of them were lost.

The British took eighty-seven pieces of ordnance in this battle, and lost in killed and wounded about 350 men. The enemy's loss, which was great, could only be conjectured. The remains of the army took shelter in the fortress of Deeg.[1]

After the flight of Holkar with his cavalry from

[1] Dispatches, iv. 233.—W.

Lord Lake expresses his opinion, on several occasions, that this was one of the severest actions during the war; "it appears to have been the hardest fought battle on this side India." "I have every reason to believe that the action of the 13th instant was a very near business." Dispatches iv. 241, 251. It was a contest less with men than with guns; the batteries of the enemy were crowded with guns and strongly posted. Thorn's War in India, plan, p. 408,—W.

Saumlee, on the morning of the 3rd, the Commander-in-Chief went after him with such expedition, as might allow him no time to ravage the country without risking an engagement with the British cavalry. On the 9th of November, that General arrived at Happer, which the enemy had left the preceding night, moving in the direction of Coorjah, with design, as was supposed, to re-cross the Jumna, in the neighbourhood of Muttra. General Lake arrived at Khass Gunge, on the 14th of November, when Holkar appeared to have taken the direct road to Futty Ghur. On the 16th, Lake arrived at Alygunge, distant about thirty-six miles from Futty Ghur. He halted only to refresh his men and horses, and, marching with the cavalry early in the night, came up with the enemy before day-break. They were encamped close under the walls of Furruckabad, and taken by surprise. The execution done upon them was therefore prodigious, and their resistance inconsiderable. Several discharges of grape being given to them from the horse artillery, the cavalry advanced, and put them to the sword. Many of the horses were still at their piquets, when the British cavalry penetrated into their camp.[1] From the 31st of

[1] The surprise was complete; Holkar would not credit the possibility of the British making so rapid a movement, and went to sleep as if no danger was near. Afterwards, in the course of the night, intelligence came by the dawk that the general was only four coss off, but the servants would not waken the Maharaja, taking on themselves to decide that the report was not true. At about midnight, (more correctly, at dawn,) General Lake came down upon Holkar's position: by some accident a tumbril blew up just before the onset, and the report awakened the Maharaja to a sense of his danger, so that he was on horseback when the enemy came, with a few more prepared for action. But before the rest were mounted, the General was upon them, and the army was defeated with great slaughter. Memoir

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

October, when they departed from Delhi, the British troops had daily marched a distance of twenty-three or twenty-four miles; during the day and night preceding the attack, they marched fifty-eight miles; and from the distance to which they pursued the enemy, must have passed over a space of more than seventy miles before they took up their ground.

After allowing the troops to halt for two days, the British General again marched in pursuit of Holkar, who fled to the Jumna in great distress, and re-crossed it near Mohabun on the 23rd, hastening to join the remainder of his army at Deeg. The Commander-in-Chief arrived at Muttra on the 28th; and joined the army at Deeg on the 1st of December. On his march he received the melancholy intelligence, that the wound of General Frazer had proved mortal. The loss of that officer was felt as a national, and almost an individual, calamity, by every Briton in India.

Of the enemy's force, a considerable portion having thrown themselves into the town and fort of Deeg, and the remainder occupying a position under its walls, arrangements were taken for the reduction of the place. The battering train and necessary stores arrived from Agra, on the 10th; and ground was broken on the 13th. The possession of an eminence which commanded the town, and in some degree the fortress itself, appeared of importance for the further operations of the siege. It was defended by a small fortification; the enemy had strongly intrenched

of Ameer Khan. Major Thorn estimates that Holkar, in the onslaught, and by dispersion, must have lost half his force; estimated, but no doubt with exaggeration, at 60,000 men. War in India, 393.—W.

themselves in its front; had erected batteries in the most commanding situations; and were favoured by the nature of the ground. The breach in the wall was practicable on the 23rd; and arrangements were made to storm it, together with the intrenchments and batteries, during the night. The force destined for the attack was divided into three columns, and moved off in such a manner as to reach the different points of attack a little before twelve at night. The right column, under Captain Kelly, was ordered to force the enemy's batteries and trenches, on the high ground to the left of the town. The left column, under Major Radcliffe, was destined to carry the batteries and trenches on the enemy's right. The centre column formed the storming party, and was led by Lieutenant-Colonel Macrae. The whole service was performed with equal gallantry and success. "By means of the darkness of the night," says the Commander-in-Chief, "the enemy was taken by surprise, and prevented from availing themselves of the advantages they possessed, or of making a very formidable resistance." The loss of the British was not trifling, and that of the enemy very great. Overawed by this example of the audacity and success of the British troops, the enemy evacuated the town of Deeg on the following day; the fort, on the succeeding night; and fled in the direction of Bhurtpore, leaving nearly the whole of their cannon behind.[1]

The fort of Deeg belonged to Runjeet Sing, the

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, p. 224, 252—273; also General Lake's Letter to the Governor-General, dated Muttra, 1st July, 1805; Papers, ut supra, No. 15, p. 35.—M. Dispatches, iv. 241.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1804.

Raja of Bhurtpore. When the British, in the battle fought on the 13th, pursued the troops of Holkar under the walls of the fort, a destructive fire of cannon and musquetry was opened upon them by the garrison. The Raja of Bhurtpore was one of the first of the chiefs in that part of India, who, at the time when General Lake advanced against Sindia beyond the Jumna, made overtures for a combination with the British state. As he was one of the most considerable of the minor sovereigns in that part of India, and possessed great influence among the Rajas of the Jaats, his accession to the British cause was treated as a fortunate event, and he was indulged with very advantageous terms. A treaty was concluded with him, by which the British government bound itself to protect his dominions; bound itself not to interfere in the smallest degree with the administration of his country; freed him entirely from the heavy tribute which he annually paid to the Mahratta powers; and of the surrounding districts, conquered from Sindia, annexed so much to the territories of the Raja, as equalled in extent and value one-third of his former dominions.

Notwithstanding these great advantages, and the Governor-General's system of defensive alliance, no sooner had Holkar assumed an attitude of defiance to the British Power, than Runjeet Sing manifested an inclination to join him. On the 1st of August, 1804, a secret agent of the Raja, with letters to Holkar, was apprehended at Muttra, and discovery made of a treacherous correspondence. The Raja, very soon after concluding his treaty with the British government, had exhorted Holkar to despise the

British power, and offered to join him, on condition of receiving certain accessions of territory. During the same month in which this discovery was made, several complaints were addressed to him by the Commander-in-Chief, on account of the little assistance received from him in providing for the war. In the intercepted correspondence, offence appeared to have been taken, by the Raja, at the violent manner in which the British resident at Muttra had decided some disputes respecting the traffic in salt; and some alarm was conveyed to his mind by a report that the English government was to introduce the English courts of justice into his dominions.[1]

Upon reference of all these circumstances to the Governor-General, though he regarded them as ample proof of traitorous designs, he was yet disposed, on the present occasion, when his defensive system was upon its trial, to exercise an uncommon degree of lenity and forbearance. He imputed the offences of the Raja and his son, to the corrupt intrigues of mischievous advisers; and said, that "the just principles of policy, as well as the characteristic lenity and mercy of the British government, required that a due indulgence should be manifested towards the imbecility, ignorance, and indolence of the native chiefs, who have been drawn into these acts of treachery and hostility, by the depravity and artifices of their servants and adherents."[2] And he instructed the Com-

[1] Another cause seems to have been a religious feeling. The letters of the agent repeatedly allude to the Raja's horror at the cow-killing propensities of the infidel English. Dispatches, Lieut-General Lake to the Marquess Wellesley, iv. 183, 187.—W.

[2] Letter from the Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief. Papers, No. 15, ut supra, p. 23. Compare the sentiments here expressed

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1804.

mander-in-Chief to warn the Raja of his danger; to assure him that no design of interfering with his government was entertained by the British rulers; and to require him to break off immediately all communication with the enemies of the British state. Towards the end of October, the Commander-in-Chief complained to the Governor-General, that the Raja had evaded his application for the troops, with which, according to the treaty, he was bound to assist the British government; while he had afforded to Holkar positive and material assistance.[1] In reply, the Governor-General left the question of peace or war to be decided by the opinion of expediency which the Commander-in-Chief, with his more intimate knowledge of the circumstances, might be induced to form; still, however, remarking, that "if considerations of security should not require the punishment of Bhurtpore, those of policy suggested the expediency of forbearance, notwithstanding the provocation which would render such punishment an act of retributive justice." The behaviour, however, of the garrison of Deeg, at the time of the battle fought under its walls, produced orders from the seat of government for the entire reduction of the Raja,

with those employed against the Nabobs of Arcot; Vide supra, p. 538.—M. Dispatches iv. 193, 353. The grounds of this opinion were furnished by Lord Lake, who from personal knowledge of the Raja and his son, considered them to be indolent and unenterprising characters, and unlikely to have embarked in any hazardous enterprise, except upon the instigation of some of the persons about them, who, from the desperate state of their fortunes, were ready to advocate the most violent measures. Dispatches iv. 184.—W.

[1] The troops also which had been professedly assembled for the purpose of co-operating with the British army, were actually engaged on the side of the enemy at the battle of Deeg. Dispatches iv. 357 —W.

and the annexation of all his forts and territories to the British dominions. As Bappoojee Sindia, the officer who, at the beginning of the war with Holkar, commanded that detachment from the army of Sindia which co-operated with General Monson at the commencement of his retreat, and was one of the chieftains included in the list of those who, under the operation of the late treaty, were to receive jaghires and pensions from the British government, had afterwards openly joined Holkar with the troops under his command; and Suddasheo Bhao, another of Sindia's officers, who had been sent to co-operate with Monson, had also joined the enemy, the Governor-General at the same time directed the Commander-in-Chief to proceed against them as rebels; try them by a court-martial; and carry the sentence into immediate execution.[1]

The loss of Deeg was a tremendous blow to Holkar and the Raja. The surrounding country immediately submitted to the authority of the British government; and General Lake, having taken the requisite steps for securing the fort, and administering the country, moved from Deeg on the 29th of December. The army of Guzerat, under the command of Colonel Murray, had been ordered to advance from the southward, in the direction of Kotah, to intercept, if made

[1] Papers, ut supra, No. 15, p. 7—37.—M. Lord Wellesley's instructions to Lord Lake, were, to issue a proclamation ordering Bapoojee Sindia and his followers to proceed to his camp by a certain day, under penalty of being considered and treated as rebels and traitors. If they did not join the camp, and afterwards became prisoners to the British army, then they were to be tried by a court-martial, and the General was authorized to carry into immediate execution the punishment which might be awarded them for their treachery and rebellion. Dispatches, iv. 263.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

by that route, the flight of Holkar into Malwa. This officer had reached the neighbourhood of Kotah by the end of December; and General Lake believed, if he could have made the Mahratta chieftain retreat in that direction, that he might have been effectually destroyed. But Holkar, though pursued from place to place, could not be driven from the Bhurtpore territories, so long as his infantry could find protection in the city of Bhurtpore, his cavalry, by its rapid movements, could elude all attacks, and supplies were derived from the resources of the Raja. The reduction of Bhurtpore presented itself, therefore, to the Commander-in-Chief as, of necessity, the first of his future operations.

After being joined at Muttra by the King's 75th regiment, which he had summoned from Cawnpore, he arrived before the capital of the Raja, on the 3rd of January, 1805. The town of Bhurtpore, eight miles in extent, was every where surrounded by a mud wall of great thickness and height, and a very wide and deep ditch filled with water. The fort was situated at the eastern extremity of the town; and the walls were flanked with bastions, at short distances, mounted with a numerous artillery. The whole force of Runjeet Sing, and as many of the surrounding inhabitants as were deemed conducive to its defence, were thrown into the place; while the broken battalions of Holkar had intrenched themselves under its walls. The British army, after driving the battalions from this position, with great slaughter, and the loss of all the artillery which they had been enabled to carry from Deeg, took up a position south-west of the town. The batteries were

opened on the 7th of January. On the 9th a breach was reported practicable; and the General resolved to assault in the evening, as the enemy had hitherto stockaded, at night, the damage sustained by the wall in the course of the day. When the storming party arrived at the ditch, they found the water exceedingly deep. Over this difficulty they prevailed; and gained the foot of the breach. Here they made several gallant and persevering exertions; but all ineffectual: they were repulsed with a heavy loss, including Lieutenant-Colonel Maitland, the officer who bravely commanded in the assault.

The operations of the besiegers were immediately renewed, and a second breach was prepared on the 21st. It was deemed advisable to give the assault by day-light. The storming party moved out of the trenches, where they had been lodged for the purpose, a little before three o'clock in the afternoon. They were unable to pass the ditch; and, being exposed for a considerable time to a fire which did great execution, were obliged to retire.

The want of military stores and provisions delayed the commencement of renewed operations, till the beginning of February, when the batteries were opened upon the wall, at some distance from the part which was formerly breached. On the 20th of the same month, the breach being as complete as it was supposed to be capable of being made, one column, composed of 200 Europeans, and a battalion of sepoys, was ordered to attack the enemy's trenches and guns outside the town; a second column, composed of 300 Europeans, and two battalions of sepoys, to attack one of the gates; while a third, headed by Lieute-

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

nant-Colonel Don, and formed of the greatest part of the European force belonging to the Bengal army, and three battalions of sepoys, was to ascend the breach. The signal to be observed by the storming party was, the commencement of the attack by the first column on the enemy's trenches, a little before four o'clock in the afternoon. This column was successful, and got immediate possession of the enemy's guns. The second column was delayed by a party of the enemy's horse; and was exposed, by a mistake, it is said, of their guide, to a destructive fire from the town, which destroyed their ladders, and rendered ineffectual the attempt on the gate. The storming party was also delayed, according to the statement of the Commander-in-Chief, by circumstances, which he does not mention; and found the ditch so deep, that it was impossible to arrive at the breach. The troops, having attempted to ascend by the bastion, were repulsed with great slaughter, though the colours of one of the native regiments were planted within a short distance of the top.

As the Commander-in-Chief ascribed the failure to accidental obstructions and delays; as the storming party had nearly gained the summit of the bastion; and as he was informed, he says, that a few hours more battering would make the ascent there perfectly easy, he determined to make another attempt on the following day. The whole European part of the Bengal army, and the greater part of two King's regiments, with upwards of four battalions of native infantry, moved on to the attack, under Brigadier-General Monson, about three o'clock in the afternoon "Discharges of grape, logs of wood, and pots filled

with combustible materials, immediately," says the report of the Commander-in-Chief, "knocked down those who were ascending; and the whole party, after being engaged in an obstinate contest for two hours, and suffering very severe loss, were obliged to relinquish the attempt, and retire to our trenches." The steepness of the ascent, and the inability of the assailants to mount, except by small parties at a time, were, it was said, the enemy's advantages.[1]

The guns of the British army had, in consequence of incessant firing, become for the most part unserviceable; the whole of the artillery stores were expended; provisions were exhausted; and the sick and wounded were numerous. It was therefore necessary to intermit the siege of Bhurtpore. One of the most remarkable, perhaps, of all the events in the history of the British nation in India, is the difficulty, found by this victorious army, of subduing the capital of a petty Raja of Hindustan. The circumstances have not been sufficiently disclosed; for, on the subject of these unsuccessful attacks, the reports of the Commander-in-Chief, are laconic. As general causes he chiefly alleges the extent of the place, the number of its defenders, the strength of its works, and lastly the incapacity of his engineers; as if a Commander-in-Chief were fit for his office, who is not himself an engineer.[2]

[1] No. 15, ut supra, p. 37, 38. No. 25, ut supra, p. 272—285.—M. Dispatches, iv. 264, 292.—W.

[2] Although it may be reasonably expected, that a commander-in-chief should be able to appreciate the abilities of his engineers, and the probable adequacy of the means at their command to overcome the resistance opposed to him, it can scarcely be held to be incumbent on him to be an engineer himself. Lord Lake was certainly no engineer; neither his

BOOK VI
CHAP. 13.

1805.

The Bombay army, from Guzerat, which had been directed to move towards Kotah, was afterward com-

education, nor his experience, nor his temperament, qualified him for directing the operations of a siege. It is said that he proposed to attack Bhurtpore, as he had done Alighur, by blowing open the gates,—in which there is great likelihood that he would have succeeded;—he was advised to the contrary, and it was determined to attempt to breach with a very ineffective battering train, with a great deficiency of officers instructed or experienced in the art of engineering, and with a great abundance of ignorance as to the strength and circumstances of the fortress. The fullest account of the siege is given by Major Thorn: many interesting particulars are also supplied by a treatise on the Attack of Mud Forts, by Colonel Galloway, and by a series of anonymous articles, entitled Military Autobiography, which are understood to be the composition of a distinguished Bengal officer, in the East Indian United Service Journal, published in Calcutta, in 1833, and 1834. From these sources, and from the oral information of officers present at the siege, some addition may be made to the meagre account which the text has derived from the official dispatches.

Operations commenced with the construction of a breaching battery, not of the most formidable description; it consisted of six eighteen-pounders, and on the right of it was a small mortar-battery of four pieces; the distance was above 700 yards. The wall of the fort extended right and left as far as the eye could reach, and was thickly studded with projecting bastions, well furnished with artillery. The spot chosen for forming a breach lay close to the right flank of one of these bastions, which enabled the defenders to enfilade the approach, a circumstance that occasioned much of the loss suffered in the attempt to storm. In the first assault some delay and confusion took place from the accidental divergence, in the dark, of the column of attack; and in Major Thorn's opinion this delay was a chief cause of the failure. This, however, may be doubted, as it may be otherwise sufficiently accounted for. When the column arrived near the wall, its progress was arrested by a deep ditch, the existence of which had not been suspected.

The distance at which the battery had been raised, and the absence of approaches, prevented the assailants from discovering what was going on along the foot of the walls, and permitted the garrison to employ working parties to widen and deepen what was a dry and neglected ditch, and to fill it for the requisite distance opposite to the breach with water, from a water-course which communicated with an extensive swamp at some short distance from the fort. Such was the impediment which arrested the column, as they were wholly unprepared for it; a few men continued to cross the ditch above the breach, and make their way to the latter by a narrow path at the foot of the wall, just broad enough to admit one man at a time. In this way a few men of the flank companies of His Majesty's 22nd mounted the breach, but support could not be given with sufficient celerity to enable

manded to join the Commander-in-Chief at Bhurtpore; where it arrived, on the 12th of February, BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

them to maintain it, and they were compelled to retire. The fort kept up a hot fire during the whole of the assault. Many men were killed on the retreat also, as the country was in possession of Holkar's cavalry, who perpetually hovered on the flanks of the columns, cutting off all stragglers.

Whatever chance of success the first attack of this description might have offered, from the courage of the troops and the intimidation of the enemy, was immeasurably diminished for a second effort, as the troops had lost and the enemy gained confidence. A somewhat stronger battery was formed, and a breach on the other side of the same bastion was effected. In order to gain some information as to the ditch a stratagem of palpable absurdity was devised: three native troopers in the character of deserters rode from the camp towards the walls, they were fired at with blank cartridges, and the people on the walls, being thus far deceived, allowed them to approach the edge of the ditch, pointing out to them the direction cf the gates. The situation of the troopers did not allow of very deliberate observation, as they rode off again as speedily as they could, being now fired at by the garrison. They returned in safety, and reported that the ditch was inconsiderable; their report was trusted to, but when the troops made their way, under a heavy and destructive fire, to the edge of the ditch, they found a sheet of water of considerable width, much broader than the ladders they had brought to cross it with, and much beyond the depth of the tallest grenadier. Some time was vainly spent in attempting to get across under a well-sustained and well-directed fire from the walls, and after much loss the column was recalled. Nothing more strongly shows the utter ignorance of the besiegers of the localities of the neighbourhood, than the injury they sustained from an impediment entirely within their own power. Had they known whence the ditch was fed, it would have been easy for them to have cut off the supply of water, and in all probability the first assault would have given them Bhurtpore.

These two failures having enforced the necessity of more regular proceedings, approaches were begun in a different position, and carried to the edge of the ditch. Supplies of stores and artillery were brought from Agra and other depôts; and more powerful batteries, though still much too weak for the purpose, opened against a part of the wall where the curtain was of less width than usual, and was effectually covered by a bastion at either extremity. On the morning of the day appointed for the storm, the garrison, whose courage had been elevated to the highest pitch by the slow progress of the siege, and the impunity with which they had murdered the wounded, and mutilated the slain, left behind after each assault, made a desperate sally upon the head of the trenches, gained possession of them for a time, and were repulsed only after they had killed the officer of His Majesty's 75th, commanding the advance, and many of the men. They gained and retained possession also of a trench in advance of the lines,

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

and under Major General Jones, who had succeeded Colonel Murray, bore a full share in the succeeding operations.

from which it was proposed to dislodge them, and follow them closely into the breach. The Europeans, however, of His Majesty's 75th and 76th, who were at the head of the columu, refused to advance, and the few men of the flank companies of the 22nd who had obeyed the command, were necessarily recalled. The entreaties and expostulations of their officers failing to produce any effect, two regiments of Native Infantry, the 12th and 15th, were summoned to the front, and gallantly advanced to the storm. These circumstances explain the delay alluded to by Lord Lake. The men were tired and disheartened by the conflict in which they had been engaged during the forenoon, and had adopted a notion that in the advanced trench which had been occupied by the enemy a mine was laid, by which they would be blown up. In this state of exhaustion and panic it would have been judicious to have deferred the assault, as persisting in it paralyzed so large a portion of the assailing force. When the column reached the ditch, it was, as before, impassable ; but some of the men inclining to the right contrived to turn it and to clamber up the rugged slope of the flanking bastion, and the colours of the 12th regiment of Native Infantry waved from the summit of the slope. There was, however, still a perpendicular parapet of some height to be surmounted; and as this was resolutely defended by the garrison, all efforts to scale it were productive only of the destruction of the assailants. Two or three of the men did get in at the front embrazure of the wall, but they were instantly cut to pieces by the enemy. So apparent an approximation to success induced the Commander-in-Chief to direct a repetition of the attack upon the bastion which had been ascended, on the following day ; and on this occasion the Europeans who had been panic-struck on the day preceding, volunteered to lead the attack, and gallantly redeemed their character. Their valour only aggravated their loss. There was no breach, and the attempt to carry the fort by scrambling in disorder up a scabrous bastion, in which no firm footing could be found, and where the party was exposed to a murderous fire, and to an equally destructive shower of deadly missiles from a numerous garrison, strong in position, and exulting in spirit, was an inconsiderate and unjustifiable casting away of men's lives.

The writer in the East Indian United Service Journal, adverting to the blame imputed to the Engineers for the failure of the attack upon Bhurtpore, remarks, "who the Commanding Engineer was, I have met with no body who could exactly tell. I believe the office passed through the hands of several individuals during the siege, but no one of them was of sufficient character, either in respect of influence or experience, to take upon himself the responsibility attached to so important a situation." He adds, however, "even if an officer of the requisite ability and experience had been present, it is doubtful whether he would have been attended to, for so

During the detention of the army before the capital of Runjeet Sing, the cavalry under General Smith had been employed in expelling Ameer Khan, an adventurer of Afghan descent, who had found the means of collecting a predatory army, and made an incursion into the Company's territory.[1] Before

confident was the General in the resistless bravery of his troops, and so impatient withal, that he could hardly brook the delay that was necessary to enable his guns to make a breach in the ramparts. He had undertaken to besiege a large, populous, and strong place, with means that were totally inadequate for such an enterprise; and in a military point of view he was highly culpable." The writer proceeds to blame the government for not providing the means whilst it enjoined the enterprise; but admitting the neglect, this does not exonerate a General, left as Lord Lake was with large discretional authority, from the culpability of attempting objects which his utter want of means rendered impossibilities.—W.

[1] Ameer Khan joined Holkar after the first storm of Bhurtpore, and co-operated with his cavalry in harassing the British camp and columns. He also took an active part in the different attempts made to cut off the English convoys coming to the siege. As these attempts were unsuccessful, the Raja of Bhurtpore ascribed their failure to want of proper concert between Ameer Khan and Holkar, and he therefore sent for them and said, "as both Sirdars could not act well together in the same field, it would be better that one should remain at Bhurtpore while the other headed an incursion into the enemy's territory, and carried the war thither." "Holkar recollecting," adds his friend and confederate, with some malice, "his misfortunes at Furruckabad and Deeg, chose to remain," and Ameer Khan, therefore, went upon this expedition. His direction was Rohilcund, of which country he was a native. He was followed on the day after his departure by General Smith, with three regiments of dragoons, three regiments of native cavalry, and a division of horse artillery. At Moradabad which was an English station, Ameer Khan's party did some mischief, but they were detained before the house of the Judge, which had been prepared for resistance, and in which the English residents, with some of the militia, had taken refuge. They defended themselves there for two days, until the approach of General Smith effected their deliverance. The Mahratta force then moved towards the hills, destroying and plundering some insignificant villages: fearing that his retreat might be cut off, Ameer Khan then retraced his steps, but was intercepted, and brought to action near Afzulgerh, on the 2nd of March. Some vigorous charges were made by the enemy, but they were resolutely encountered, and driven with some loss from the field. After the plunder of some other towns in Rohilcund, and some fruitless operations against detachments and convoys of the English, Ameer Khan recrossed the Ganges on the 13th of

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

the preparations were completed for resuming the siege of Bhurtpore, this force returned, and might, it appeared to the Commander-in-Chief, be now advantageously employed in dislodging Holkar from the neighbourhood of Bhurtpore; and, if possible, expelling him from that quarter of India. At two o'clock in the morning of the 29th of March, he left his camp, with the whole of the cavalry and the reserve, intending to surprise the enemy about daybreak. Colonel Don, with the reserve, moved directly upon their left, while the General himself made a circuit to their right, in the line in which it was expected they would fly from the attack on their left. They were so much, however, upon their guard, as to be secured by a timely flight from any considerable injury. In two days, it was heard, that they were again encamped within twenty miles of Bhurtpore. On the 1st of April, the Commander-in-Chief proceeded with the same force at midnight, for another chance of reaching them before they could take to flight. Though now passing the night in so much vigilance that they kept their horses saddled, they had not begun to march before the British force were within two hundred yards from them, and having horses superior both in speed and strength, were able to perform upon them considerable execution, before they had time to disperse. So little did the enemy think of defending themselves, that of the

March, attended, according to his own account, by no more than 100 men. He contrived to collect some of his scattered forces, with whom he rejoined Holkar on the 20th of March. General Smith returned to camp on the 23rd, having effectually frustrated Ameer Khan's predatory designs. War in India, 430. Life of Ameer Khan, 250.—W.

British, in either of those onsets, not a man was lost.

In addition to other causes, which tended to reduce the power of Holkar, the most respectable of the chiefs who belonged to his army now came with their followers to the English camp. The Raja of Bhurtpore, also, discovering the fallacy of the hopes which he had built upon Holkar, and dreading the effects of a renewed attack, began, soon after the suspension of operations, to testify his desire for reconciliation. Though an example to counteract the impressions made upon the minds of the people of Hindustan, by the successful resistance of the Raja of Bhurtpore, might have appeared, at this time, exceedingly useful; yet some strong circumstances recommended a course rather of forbearance than of revenge. The season was very far advanced, and Bhurtpore might still make a tedious defence: the severity of the hot winds would destroy the health of the Europeans in the trenches, and affect even that of the natives; great inconvenience was sustained from the continuance of Holkar in that quarter of India, from which it would be difficult to expel him, with Bhurtpore for a place of refuge and support: And, above all, it was necessary to have the army in a state of readiness to act against Sindia, who appeared on the point of renewing the war. The proposals of the Raja, therefore, met the British rulers in a very compliant temper; and the terms of a new treaty were settled on the 10th of April, when the preparations for the renewal of the siege were completed, and the army had actually taken up its position at the place. As compensation

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

for the expense which the Raja, by his disobedience, had inflicted on the British government, he agreed to pay, by instalments, a sum of twenty lacs of Furruckabad rupees; and the additional territory, with which he had been aggrandized by the Company, was resumed. In other respects he was allowed to remain in the same situation in which he had been placed by the preceding treaty. The fort of Deeg was not indeed to be restored till after experience, for some time had, of his fidelity and friendship; but if that were obtained, a part of the compensation-money would not be required.[1]

The conclusion of a treaty with Sindia, even his entering into the system of subsidiary defence, created no sense of tranquillity, no expectation of peace between him and the British government. Before the signature of the treaty of subsidiary alliance, a dispute had arisen about the fort of Gualior, and the territory of Gohud. The British government included these possessions in the construction of that article of the treaty which bound Sindia to all the engagements formed by the British government during the war, with any of the chiefs who had previously paid to him tribute or obedience. Sindia contended that they could not be included in that article by any just and reasonable construction; and also represented them as so important to himself, that he could by no means retain his state and condition without them.

The behaviour of Ambajee Englah, or Ingliah, had produced even hostile operations between the time

[1] No. 15, ut supra, p. 40—45, 53.—M. See Treaty. Wellesley Dispatches, iv. App., p. 636.—W.

1805.

of signing the treaty of peace, and signing the treaty of defensive alliance. After having separated his interests from those of Sindia, under whom he rented and governed the possessions in question, and after having formed engagements with the British government, on the terms which it held out, during the war, to every chief whom it found possessed of power; that versatile leader, as soon as he understood that peace was likely to be concluded with Sindia, renounced his engagements with the English, and endeavoured to prevent them from obtaining possession of the fort and districts which he had agreed to give up. The Commander-in-Chief sent troops, and seized them.

The disputes on the subject of Gualior and Gohud began on the 17th of February, 1804; and were pressed, with infinite eagerness, by the ministers of Sindia. They did not prevent the signature of the defensive treaty, because the Mahratta ministers declared, that, how much soever convinced of his right, and how deeply soever his interests would be affected by the alienation of that right, their master would not allow it to disturb the relations of peace so happily established; but would throw himself on the honour and generosity of the British chiefs. They argued and contended, that the article of the treaty which bound him to the engagements, formed with his dependants and tributaries by the British government, could only refer to such chiefs as the Rajas of Jodepoor and Jyepoor, or, at any rate, to Zemindars and Jaghiredars; that Gohud was the immediate property of the Maha Raja; that it was absurd to talk of a Rana of Gohud; as no such

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

person was known; as all the pretensions of that family were extinct, and the province had been in the immediate and absolute possession of Sindia and his predecessor for thirty years; that no right could be justly founded on the revival of an antiquated claim, in favour of some forgotten individual of an ancient family; and that it was not for the interest of the British government, any more than of Sindia, to call in question the foundations of actual possession, since a great part of all that belonged to both was held by neither a more ancient, nor a more valid title, than that which Sindia possessed to the territory of Gohud. As for the fort of Gualior, it was not so much, they affirmed, as a part of Gohud; it was a fortress of the Mogul, granted to Sindia, of which the Rana of Gohud, even when such a personage existed, could be regarded as no more than the Governor, nominated by Sindia, and employed during his pleasure. The English affirmed, that as the operation of the treaty extended, by the very terms, to all the territories of Sindia, excepting those "situated to the southward of the territories of the Rajas of Jyepoor, Jodepoor, and the Rana of Gohud," it was evident, that it was meant to apply to those of the Rana of Gohud: that if the possession in question had not passed to the English, by treaty with the parties to whom they were now consigned, they would have passed to them by conquest; as the army, after the battle of Laswarce, was actually moving towards Gohud and Gualior, when Ambajee Ingliah, against whom the heir of the family of the Rana of Gohud had been acting, in aid of the British government, with a considerable body of

troops, concluded a treaty, by which they were surrendered.

It would appear, that General Wellesley believed there was weight in the arguments of Sindia. In the answer which he returned to Major Malcolm, when that officer made communication to him of the conclusion of the treaty of defensive alliance, which he negotiated with Sindia: "It appears," he remarked, "that Sindia's ministers have given that Prince reason to expect that he would retain Gualior; and, I think it possible, that, considering all the circumstances of the case, his Excellency the Governor-General may be induced to attend to Sindia's wishes upon this occasion. At all events, your despatches contain fresh matter, upon which it would be desirable to receive his Excellency's orders, before you proceed to make any communication to Sindia's Durbar, on the subject of Gualior."

The Governor-General continued steadfastly to consider the arrangement which he had made respecting Gualior and Gohud, as necessary to complete his intended plan of defence, by a chain of allied princes and strong positions between the British and Mahratta frontiers. Sindia, after a fruitless contest, was obliged to submit; and on the 21st of May, 1804, he received in public Durbar, the list of treaties to which he was required to conform.

The apparent termination of this dispute by no means introduced the sentiments of friendship between the two governments. In a letter dated the 18th of October, 1804, which was addressed, in the name of Sindia, to the Governor-General, various

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

complaints were urged, "tending," says the British ruler, "to implicate the justice and good faith of the British government, in its conduct towards that chieftain."[1]

[1] As subsequently intimated, (p. 623,) this letter, although dated in October, did not reach the Governor-General until the middle of February. The delay is not sufficiently accounted for by its circuitous conveyance, as noticed in Lord Wellesley's reply to Sindia. The letter could not have been dispatched at the date when it was written, and other probable causes may be assigned for its subsequent retardation. The whole of the discussions with Sindia were an exemplification of the cat in the adage, "letting I dare not wait upon, I would." Sindia's sympathies were with Holkar, but he wanted the resolution to declare them; and with the varying fortunes of that chief, his determination to join him or to keep aloof alternated. A strong party in his court, at the head of which was his father-in-law, Serjee Rao Ghatkay, listening only to their hatred of the English, believed, and endeavoured to make Sindia believe, that Holkar must triumph if supported by Sindia; that he might, even without such assistance, eventually succeed. Opposed to this party was another of the Maharaja's advisers, with the chief minister Bapoojce Wittul at their head, and their representations contributed to shake Sindia's resolution. The persuasions and arguments of either, however, gained or lost efficacy with the course of events; and that under the fluctuation of feeling thus produced, the letter was composed, kept back, and dispatched, is probable from a consideration of what had occurred. At the end of August Monson's detachment was driven out of Malwa and destroyed. In the course of September Holkar was in occupation of Muttra and threatened Agra, and nothing was anticipated amongst the Mahrattas but the total overthrow of the English. In this state of excitement the letter, which is little better than a defiance, was composed, and it may have been sent off to the Vakeel at Benares. In the course of October, however, Lord Lake with his army was in the field; the attempt upon Delhi was defeated, and affairs began to look doubtful. The Vakeel was then probably enjoined to delay the delivery of the letter by undertaking a long journey from Benares to Calcutta, performed no doubt deliberately, so that he might be easily overtaken, and his ultimate instructions be regulated by intermediate events. Then came news of the pursuit and surprise of Furruckabad, and of the battle and siege of Deeg; and a further delay took place which would have probably ended in a total suppression of the dispatch, if the repulse at Bhurtpore in the beginning of January had not turned the scale in favour of co-operation with Holkar, and the journey of the messenger was completed. This is in all likelihood the true explanation of the interval of four months that elapsed between the date and the delivery of Sindia's letter.

As to the complaints preferred in that letter, those which had any

First of all, the British government had used him ill in regard to money; for, whereas the losses to

decency in them had been repeatedly discussed with the Resident in Sindia's court, or in his camp, and had been, as it was supposed, finally disposed of. On the 18th of May the Resident "took occasion to require a formal renunciation of Dowlut Rao Sindia's claim to the fort and territory of Gwalior and Gohud; and the minister in reply authorized the Resident to assure the Governor-General that the claim had been completely relinquished by his master." The treaty was accordingly ratified to this effect by Sindia himself, on the 24th of May. His again urging the claim after such full and formal renunciation of it, could only have proceeded from a belief that the British government might now be intimidated into an acquiescence in an act of injustice.

From this time forward the main point pressed upon the consideration of the Governor-General by Sindia's ministers, was the grant of pecuniary assistance, without which, it was affirmed, Sindia could take no part in the war against Holkar, as he could not move his army from Burhanpur. That he was labouring under financial difficulties, was no doubt true, but it was not true to the extent asserted, for when it suited him to march, he moved towards the scene of hostilities without having received the demanded aid. Pecuniary assistance, however, was promised him, if he would satisfy the British government that he was not engaged in any hostile designs against them. The proofs insisted on were the dismissal from his court of Holkar's Vakeel, who at first openly, and afterwards secretly, resided with Sindia, and was frequently admitted to private conferences with him and his ministers. The next condition was, the removal from his counsels of Serjee Rao Ghatkay, a man, as the Mahrattas universally acknowledged, of infamous character, and notoriously inimical to the English, and in communication with Holkar. He had been obliged to withdraw from the court by the odium he had incurred with his countrymen, and had resided at Poonah; but in August, when the British arms had suffered a reverse, made his appearance at Burhanpore, and speedily gained an ascendency over the mind of his son-in-law. Bapoojee Wittul dying at the end of 1804, Serjee Rao became chief minister. The third and last condition insisted on by the Resident was Sindia's march to his capital, Ougein, where he would be advantageously situated for the protection of Malwa, and less readily in communication with the enemies of the British state. These conditions were repeatedly assented to, receded from, evaded, refused, promised, with the most barefaced and disgraceful want of consistency, and with the evident purpose of adhering to no pledge, observing no faith, which it might be thought safe to violate. The British government would have been fully justified in punishing such insolence and perfidy, by the renewal of hostilities, the end of which must have been Sindia's speedy destruction. Knowledge of his inability to resist usually came opportunely to Dowlut Rao's recollection, when matters

which he had recently been exposed had deprived him of the pecuniary means necessary to bring his

1805.

seemed verging to extremity, and no submission was too base, no stratagem too villanous, of which the effect was to dissuade or prevent the British Resident from quitting the Mahratta camp, a measure which Sindia dreaded as equivalent to a declaration of war.

Sindia at last consented to leave Burhanpore on pretence of moving to his capital: here, instead of taking the road to Ougein, he marched to the east, in the direction of Bundelkhand, where Ameer Khan, with a body of horse, was carrying on military operations on Holkar's part. On the way, he committed an unprovoked aggression on the Nawab of Bhopal, an independent prince, an attack upon whom, without any communication with the English government, was a breach of the treaty of defensive alliance. Thence he proceeded to Saugur; and, asserting that he was entitled to the payment of a balance due on account of an assignment to him by the Peshwa, levied contributions on the country, and besieged the town. Saugur belonged to the Peshwa, the ally of the British government: hostile proceedings against the former were virtually so against the latter, and were every way incompatible with the relations in which all three powers stood towards each other. At Saugur, Sindia was in communication with Ameer Khan at Bhilsa, and with Ambajee and other sirdars in Malwa, who were in arms against the English; and his language, and that of his ministers, became less equivocal. The communications made by the Resident, of Lord Lake's successes, were unnoticed; whilst those of Holkar's, real or fabricated, were received with marks of public exultation. Nine battalions of infantry, with sixty-five guns, and a large body of Pindarries, joined the camp; and every thing bore so decidedly the appearance of hostility, that the Acting Resident, Mr. Jenkins—the Resident, Mr. Webbe, having died—determined to quit the camp, and applied for passports. He was desired to wait some days, when Ambajee Inglia would arrive, and it would be settled whether Sindia would march to Ougein, or the Resident should receive his dismissal;—a declaration equivalent to an announcement of contemplated war, and calculated, therefore, to confirm the representative of the English government in his intention. When this was found to be the case, Sindia was alarmed, and fresh pretexts, and renewed promises of a more friendly complexion, prevailed upon the Resident to delay his threatened departure. The pretexts proved, as usual, frivolous or false; the promises were broken, the instant they had served the purpose of the moment; and, additional proofs of Sindia's intrigues with Holkar having been received, the Acting Resident would no longer be delayed, and left the camp, with his suite and baggage, on the 23rd of January, 1805

At the end of his first march messengers from Sindia overtook him, and entreated him to return for an interview with the Maharaja, who was pre-

forces into the field, the English had disregarded his earnest applications for the sums necessary to enable

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

pared to comply entirely with the wishes of the British Government. Mr. Jenkins accordingly returned, leaving his tents in a grove near the camp of Sindia's regular brigades. He was detained at the Durbar until evening, when news arrived that his escort had been attacked by an overwhelming force of Pindarries, the officer commanding it, the surgeon attached to the Residency, and several of the sepoys had been wounded, and the whole of the baggage carried off. A similar atrocity had been attempted on a previous occasion. On the night of the 29th December, the public baggage tent had been attacked, and the guard overpowered, but the plunder was only partial, and the violence of a more unauthorized character. In either case, all sanction was disavowed by Sindia, and he professed extreme horror and indignation at the conduct of the plunderers, but no attempt was made to detect or punish them, nor was the property restored. The text ascribes the outrage to Serjee Rao alone, in hopes to embroil Sindia beyond remedy with the British Government, but it is not likely that it was perpetrated without Sindia's cognizance, and it had probably no deeper design than the prevention of the Resident's departure. The Governor-General, although he immediately demanded Sindia's disavowal of any concern in this transaction, and reparation for the wrong inflicted, (Dispatches iv. 296,) under a guarded menace of the revival of hostilities, was not willing to ascribe it to any other cause than the uncontrollable licentiousness of the Pindarries, and did not judge it prudent to take any further notice of the occurrence. The same precarious and unsafe sort of intercourse was in consequence maintained for a further period, until a change of councils in the administration of the British Government rewarded the perfidy of Dowlut Rao Sindia with the possession of Gohud and Gwalior.

The dispatch from which the preceding details are principally extracted contains also a report of the negotiations with the Berar Raja, which are not adverted to in the text, although they equally threatened to add to the enemies of the British Government. In the month of August news of Holkar's successes reached Berar, with circumstances of great exaggeration, disseminating, as they had done elsewhere, erroneous impressions of the injury he had inflicted upon his opponents. Intrigue was immediately at work to prevail upon the Raja to take the opportunity of recovering some of the losses of the late war: the Resident was made acquainted with the existence of a correspondence in which plans were proposed to the Raja for seizing the province of Sumbhulpore, and for co-operating with the Raja of Khurda and other petty chiefs in Cuttack, who actually rose in insurrection. The replies of the Raja expressed his approbation of these projects, contained instructions for carrying them into effect, and enjoined secrecy and caution. It was also ascertained that he was in communication with Sindia and with Holkar. In October, a vakeel from Ameer Khan arrived at Nagpore, and one who had been sent to Sindia returned.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

him to co-operate in the subjugation of Holkar, the consequence of which was, that when he sent two chiefs, Bappojee Sindia, and Suddasheo Bhao, to join the army under General Lake, as that General would afford them no money, they were soon obliged to separate from him, in order to find a subsistence, and even to effect a temporary and feigned conjunction with the enemy, to avoid destruction, either by his arms, or by the want of subsistence.

Secondly, the British government had used him ill, in respect to Gualior and Gohud; which had long formed part of his immediate dominions, and were not included in the list, delivered to General Wellesley, of the places which he ceded by the treaty of peace.

Thirdly, his tributary, the Raja of Jodepore, was

The return of the latter was immediately followed by orders for the assemblage of the Raja's troops and his army under Saccaram Bukshee marched towards the frontier, whilst in other parts of his dominions levies of men and other military preparations were made with great activity. The representations of the Resident against these measures were met by assurances of continued amity, and the military movements were accounted for as necessary to resist a threatened incursion of Ameer Khan, who had engaged to assist the Nawab of Bhopal in opposing the claims of the Raja of Berar upon Hoshunghabad. Some acts of plunder, committed on the territories of Nagpore, by Ameer Khan's Pindarries, gave some colour to the assertions of the Raja; and the precautions taken in Sumbhulpore and Cuttack, with intelligence of the actions of Furruckabad and Deeg, seem to have determined the court of Nagpore at least to wait for the further developement of events, before they manifested their hostile sentiments. Some further anxiety and suspicion were created by the conduct of the Raja's brother, Venkajee Bhonsla, who collected a body of troops, and plundered some villages in the territory of the Nizam, but his conduct was earnestly disavowed by the Raja, and his Jagir put under sequestration, reparation was made for the injury committed, and no further fear was entertained of the Raja's entering into any confederacy adverse to the British state. Letter of the Governor-General to the Secret Committee, 24th March, 1805. Dispatches iv. 322.—W.

included in the list of princes protected by engagements with the English; while that Raja himself disclaimed all such engagements; had received into his protection the family of Holkar; and had written frequently to Sindia, declaring, that he remained in the same relation to him as before.

Fourthly, the lands which were to be restored, as the private property of Sindia, had not yet been given up; and the pensions, and other sums, which were agreed for, had not been regularly paid.

Fifthly, the British government had not afforded to his dominions that protection which, by treaty, they owed; for even when Colonel Murray was at Oujein, Holkar had besieged the fort of Mundesoor, and laid waste the surrounding country; while Meer Khan, the Afghan, who was a partisan of Holkar, had captured Bhilsa, and plundered the adjoining districts.[1]

At the time of the date of this letter, Sindia had moved from Boorhanpore, and reached the Nerbudda, which his army was already beginning to cross. In compliance with the urgent remonstrances of the

[1] The replies of the Governor-General to their allegations were sufficiently convincing, but it is worth while to notice the first, more particularly, as an example of impudence not exceeded by any thing in the annals even of Mahratta diplomacy. It was matter of universal notoriety that these two chiefs had behaved with the most unequivocal treachery, aud Sindia must have known both the fact and the cause. "No Mahratta doubts," says Captain Grant, "that Bapoojee Sindia and Seudasheo Bhao deserted to Holkar with Dowlut Rao's consent." Mahr. Hist., 3. The fifth allegation is scarcely inferior in shamelessness to the first, for Colonel Murray's inability to protect the country of Sindia against Holkar, was mainly owing, not only to the utter want of that co-operation which the treaty entitled him to expect from Sindia's troops, but to the opposition, little short of hostility, which he experienced from Sindia's officers. Letter from Marquess Wellesley to Dowlut Rao Sindia, 4th of April. Dispatches iv., 294.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

British government, he professed the intention of repairing to the capital of his dominions, and undertaking the regulation of his affairs. In reality, he took the direction of Bhopaul; and, with or without his consent, two signal enormities took place. Some of his troops plundered Saugur, a city and district pertaining to the Peshwa; and a party of his irregular troops attacked and plundered the camp of the British resident. At the time when this outrage was committed, the British force in Bundelcund had been summoned, by the Commander-in-Chief, to reinforce the main army at Bhurtpore, which had suffered a material reduction in the late unsuccessful attempts. The army from Bundelcund was on its march, and had arrived at Gualior, when, late in the evening, hircarrahs came in with intelligence of the violation of the British Residency, in Sindia's camp. The greatest alarm was excited. The route through Bundelcund into Allahabad, from Allahabad to Benares, and from Benares to Calcutta, was denuded of all its troops; and there was nothing to oppose the progress of Sindia, through the heart of the British dominions, to Calcutta itself. It immediately suggested itself to the minds of the British officers, that Sindia had resolved to avail himself of the fortunate moment, when the British troops were all withdrawn to the disastrous siege of Bhurtpore, to perform this brilliant exploit; and that the violation of the Residency was the first act of the war. Under this impression, it was resolved to march back the army of Bundelcund to Jansee, which lay on the road by which it was necessary for Sindia to pass. Sindia proceeded rather in a contrary direction, towards

1805.

Malwa. The probability is, that Serjee Rao Gautka, his minister, and father-in-law, committed the outrage upon the British Residency, in hopes to embroil him beyond remedy with the British government, and thus to ensure the war to which he found it so difficult to draw the feeble and irresolute mind of his Prince; while the promptitude with which the British force was again opposed to his march into the British dominions maintained, in his mind, the ascendency of those fears which the minister found it so hard to subdue. A spirited prince might have made a very different use of his opportunity.

The letter which contained the complaints of Sindia was conveyed in so tedious a mode, that four months elapsed before it was delivered at Calcutta; nor was the answer penned till the 14th of April, 1805. The Governor-General had satisfactory arguments with which to repel the several allegations of Sindia; though he allowed that the Raja of Jodepore had refused to abide by the stipulation contracted with the British government; which, therefore, would not interfere between him and Sindia. He then proceeded to give a list of offences, thirteen in number, with which Sindia was chargeable toward the British state.

First, after remaining at Boorhanpore, till towards the end of the year 1804, Sindia, instead of proceeding to his capital, in conformity with the pressing instances of the Resident, and his own repeated promises, for the purpose of co-operating with the British government, directed his march toward the territory of Bhopaul, where he was not only remote

from the scene of utility, but positively injurious, by alarming and robbing one of the British allies.

Secondly, notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of the Resident, a vakeel of Holkar was allowed to remain in Sindia's camp; and Sindia's minister maintained with him a constant clandestine intercourse.

Thirdly, Sindia's officers, at Oujein, instead of yielding any assistance to the operations of Colonel Murray, had obstructed them.

Fourthly, two of Sindia's commanders had deserted from the British army, and had served with the enemy during almost the whole of the war.

Fifthly, Sindia, notwithstanding his complaint of the want of resources, had augmented his army as the powers of the enemy declined, thereby exciting a suspicion of treacherous designs.

Sixthly, the heinous outrage had been committed of attacking and plundering the camp of the British Resident, without the adoption of a single step towards compensation, or atonement, or even the discovery and punishment of the offenders.

The remaining articles in the list were either of minor importance, or so nearly, in their import, coincident with some of the articles mentioned above, that it appears unnecessary to repeat them.

The Governor-General declared; "By all these acts, your Highness has manifestly violated, not only the obligations of the treaty of defensive alliance, but also of the treaty of peace." According to this declaration, it was the forbearance alone of the British government, which prevented the immediate renewal of war.

The next step which was taken by Sindia, produced expectation that hostilities were near. On the 22nd of March, 1835, he announced, officially, to the British Resident, his resolution of marching to Bhurtpore, with the intention of interposing his mediation, for the restoration of peace, between the British government and its enemies. "To proceed," says the Governor-General, "at the head of an army to the seat of hostilities, for the purpose of interposing his unsolicited mediation, was an act not only inconsistent with the nature of his engagements, but insulting to the honour, and highly dangerous to the interests, of the British government." In the instructions, however, which the Governor-General issued upon this emergency, he was extremely anxious to avoid the extremity of war, unless in the case of actual aggression. But he deemed it necessary to make immediate arrangements for seizing the possessions of Sindia, if that chieftain should proceed to extremities. Colonel Close was vested with the same powers which had formerly been confided to General Wellesley; and orders were issued to the officers commanding the subsidiary force at Poona, and at Hyderabad, to occupy, with their troops, the positions most favourable for invading the southern dominions of Sindia. The force in Guzerat, which had been weakened by the detachment sent to cooperate in the war against Holkar, was reinforced, with a view as well to defence, as to seize whatever belonged to Sindia in Guzerat, and its vicinity. Upon some further disclosure of the hostile, or, at least, the unfriendly councils of Sindia, the Commander-in-Chief was instructed to oppose the march

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

to Bhurtpore, as what, "under all the circumstances of the case, constituted not only a declaration of war, but a violent act of hostility."[1]

The Governor-General, in the event of a war, now resolved to reduce the power of Sindia to what he calls "the lowest scale." He observes, that the principle of compensation, which had regulated the terms of the former treaty, "had proved inadequate to the purposes of British security, and that the restraints imposed by the provisions of the treaty of

[1] The preposterous folly of Sindia in thus uniting with Holkar when all prospect of success had vanished, is explained by the life of Ameer Khan: this determination must have been formed some time before he announced his intention of marching to Bhurtpore; and when he announced his intention he fully expected that the Raja was still at war with the English. The treaty with the Raja was not concluded until the 17th of April; and although negotiations had commenced on the 10th of March, this was a secret to both Holkar and Ameer Khan, and the Raja was at the same time carrying on negotiations with Sindia, for at his request Ameer Khan was sent with Holkar's concurrence to Subbulghur, to expedite arrangements for bringing up Dowlut Rao Sindia. This was as late as the 7th of April, by which date Sindia had arrived at Subbulghur, on his way to Bhurtpore. After Ameer Khan's departure, and "when Serjee Rao Ghautka had arrived near to Bhurtpore, the Raja, finding it impossible to keep his secret longer, made it known to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, telling him that he had made his terms some time before with the English." Sindia, therefore, had been led into the snare by the Raja of Bhurtpore, who had been treacherous to his late allies, and deserted the Mahrattas, when they could no longer wholly disavow their proceedings. It was fortunate that the Jaut found it his interest not to deceive the English, for had he upon the near approach of Sindia broken off the negotiation and resumed hostilities, Lord Lake, with his army dispirited and weakened by the siege, would have been awkwardly situated, between the forces of Bhurtpore and those of Holkar and Ameer Khan on the one hand, and those of Dowlut Rao Sindia and Ambajee Inglia on the other. That it was Dowlut Rao's intention to fall upon the rear of the English army, had he found, as he expected, hostilities still in progress at Bhurtpore, cannot be reasonably doubted, notwithstanding his amicable professions. Ameer Khan declares, in speaking of the subsequent separation of the Mahratta chiefs, that "Sindia broke off from the treaty of offensive and defensive alliance against the English," which is a confession that such an alliance had been formed. Life, 273.

1805.

peace upon Dowlut Rao Sindia's means of mischief were insufficient—that another principle of pacification must therefore be assumed; that Sindia must not be permitted to retain the rights and privileges of an independent state; nor any privileges to an extent that might at a future time enable him to injure the British or their allies; and that the British government must secure the arrangement by establishing a direct control over the acts of his government—experience having sufficiently manifested, that it was in vain to place any reliance on the faith, justice, sincerity, gratitude, or honour of that chieftain"—he might have added, or any chieftain of his nation, or country.

No declaration can be more positive and strong of the total inefficacy of the system of defensive alliance. As there is here a declaration of what was *not* sufficient for British security, namely, the system of defensive alliance, so there is a declaration of what alone *is* sufficient, namely, the total prostration and absolute dependence of every surrounding power. This, however, we have more than once had occasion to observe, is conquest—conquest in one of the worst of its shapes: worst, both with respect to the people of India, as adding enormously to the villanies of their own species of government, instead of imparting to them the blessings of a better one; and the people of England, as loading them with all the cost of governing and defending the country, without giving them all the revenues.[1]

[1] No argument against Lord Wellesley's system of defensive alliance can be drawn from the transactions with Sindia, for no such alliance with him, on the principle of military control, had been formed. The treaty

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

Sindia continued his march to the northward, and on the 29th of March had advanced with all his cavalry and Pindarees to Subbulghur, on the river Chumbul, leaving his battalions and guns in the rear. His force at this time was understood by the British government to consist of eight or nine thousand cavalry, 20,000 Pindarees, and nominally eighteen battalions of infantry with 140 guns, all in a very defective state of discipline and equipment. On the 31st of March he had advanced about eighteen miles in a north-easterly direction from Subbulghur. Here he was joined by Ambajee; and the British Resident in his camp, understanding that it was his intention to cross the Chumbul with his cavalry and Pindarees, leaving the bazars and heavy baggage of the army

with him contemplated him as an entirely independent prince, and left him full power over both his civil and military administration; his incapability of exercising this power, except to his own hurt and the injury of his neighbours, was an argument in favour of that sort of control which Lord Wellesley sought to establish, and which had been successfully established in the case of the Peshwa. There is no doubt that the Peshwa was in secret communication with Sindia and Holkar, throughout the whole of these transactions; and had it not been for the check imposed upon him by the subsidiary force, he would probably have been as troublesome as his neighbours. As far, therefore, as the great object of Lord Wellesley's system, the preservation of peace in India, was concerned, these occurrences proved that it was not to be effected by any interchange of obligations on the reciprocal footing of equal independence. This had never been doubted, and the efficacy of the system of defensive alliance was not impeached by the events that had occurred, nor was it denied by Lord Wellesley's declaration. On the contrary it was affirmed by it. Lord Wellesley declared that in regard to Sindia it must be inferred, that he must not be longer allowed that share of independence which he had abused; that all military means of mischief must be taken away from him. This may be called by what name the author pleases, but this was all along the essential part of the system of defensive alliance, and it cannot be said to have proved ineffective in regard to Sindia, as it had not been tried. All that had been substantiated by our connexion, had been that no alliance of any kind soever could be maintained with a prince upon whom no obligations were binding, with whom no treaties were sacred.—W.

under the protection of Ambajee, requested an audience. His object was to represent to Sindia the impropriety of crossing the Chumbul, and the propriety of waiting for Colonel Close, who was expected soon to arrive on an important mission from the capital of the Raja of Berar. The propositions of the British agent were received with the most amicable professions on the part of Sindia and his ministers; who represented, that the embarrassment of his finances was so great as to prevent him from returning to effect the settlement of his country; that his march towards Bhurtpore was intended solely to accelerate the arrival of peace; but that, if the British government would make any arrangement for the relief of his urgent necessities, he would regulate his proceedings agreeably to its desires. A copy of a letter to the Governor-General was also read, in which reparation was promised for the outrage on the Resident's camp.

This conference, when reported to the Governor-General, appeared to him to indicate a more submissive turn in the councils of Sindia; the Resident was accordingly instructed, to inform the chieftain, that the atonement offered for the outrage was accepted; that the distresses of his government would be relieved by pecuniary aid, if he would act in co-operation with the British government; and that he could do this, only by returning to the southward, and employing himself in the seizure of the remaining possessions of Holkar in Malwa.

On the 2nd of April, Sindia marched about eight miles in a retrograde direction towards Subbulghur; leaving the whole of his baggage and bazars under

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

the charge of Ambajee. On the 3rd, the Resident was visited by Sindia's vakeel, whose commission was, to importune him on the subject of pecuniary relief. A discussion ensued on the two points, of receiving money, and deferring the declared intention of crossing the Chumbul and proceeding to Kerowly, till the arrival of Colonel Close. The result was, an agreement on the part of Sindia, to return and wait at Subbulghur, and on that of the British Resident, to afford a certain portion of pecuniary aid.

On the 7th of April, Ameer Khan departed from Bhurtpore, with the avowed intention of joining the army of Sindia. On the same day the minister of Sindia marched towards Bhurtpore, with a large body of Sindia's pindarees, and a considerable part of his cavalry Information was sent to the Resident, that the proposed mediation was the object of the march.

On the 11th, General Lake received a letter from the said minister, who had arrived at Weir, a town situated about fifteen miles S.W. of Bhurtpore, stating that, as the British Resident in the camp of Sindia had expressed a desire for the mediation of his master, he had commanded him to proceed for that purpose to Bhurtpore. The British General replied, that, peace having been concluded with the Raja of Bhurtpore, the advance of the minister of Sindia was unnecessary, and might subvert the relations of amity between the British government and his master, to whom it was highly expedient that he should return. Notwithstanding this, he advanced on the 12th, with a small party of horse, within a few miles of Bhurtpore, whence he transmitted a message

to the Raja, soliciting a personal conference, which the Raja declined. The minister then returned to Weir. Holkar, who had been obliged, on the submission of the Raja, to leave Bhurtpore, joined him, at this place, with three or four thousand exhausted cavalry, nearly the whole of his remaining force; and both proceeded towards the camp of Sindia at Subbulghur.

The advance of the minister, immediately after the master had agreed to halt, the Governor-General regarded as an evasion and a fraud. The conduct of Sindia, and some intercepted letters, taken from an agent of Sindia, despatched to Holkar toward the close of the month of March, convinced the Governor-General of a coincidence in the views of these two chiefs. And, whether they united their forces for the sake of obtaining better terms of peace, or for the purpose of increasing their abilities for war; as it would be of great importance for them, in either case, to prevent an accommodation between the British government and Runjeet Sing, it was not doubted, that the design of Sindia to proceed to Bhurtpore had that prevention for its end.[1] On the 11th, the 14th, and the 15th of April, Bappojee Sindia, Ameer Khan, and Holkar, respectively, joined the camp of Sindia, who offered to the British Resident a frivolous pretext for affording a cordial reception to each. He affirmed that Holkar, who had determined, he said, to renew his invasion of the British territories, had, in compliance with his persuasions, abandoned that

[1] As mentioned in the note he had advanced in no expectation of preventing a peace, but in full belief that the war continued.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

design, and consented to accept his mediation for the attainment of peace.

1805. On the 21st of April, the Commander-in-Chief, with the whole of his army, moved from Bhurtpore, toward the position of the united chiefs; and signified his desire to the British Resident, that he would take the earliest opportunity of quitting Sindia's camp. The necessity of this measure appeared to him the stronger from a recent event. Holkar had seized the person of Ambajee, for the purpose of extorting from him a sum of money; an audacity to which he would not have proceeded, in the very camp of Sindia, without the consent of that chieftain, aud a perfect concurrence in their views.[1]

On the 27th, in consequence of instructions from the Commander-in-Chief, the British Resident solicited an interview with Sindia; and he thought proper to give notice that the object of it was, to require the return of Sindia from the position which he then occupied, and his separation from Holkar. The evening of the same day was appointed; but, when it arrived, the attendance of the Resident was not demanded. All that day, and the succeeding night,

[1] A curious and characteristic account of Ambajee's seizure is given by Ameer Khan. It was effected by him under the orders of Holkar, and with the express permission of Sindia. Dowlut Rao observed, "Ambajee Inglia, who professes to be my servant and has lacs of rupees in ready money by him, will give no aid. If you can contrive a way of extorting money from him you have my permission, but the half must be given to me." Ambajee was confined and tortured; he attempted to destroy himself, but did not succeed. He was at last obliged to purchase his liberation by the payment of thirty-eight, or according to some accounts, fifty-five lacs of rupees. Ambajee Inglia was in consequence instrumental in sowing a dissension between Sindia and Holkar, and inducing the former to make his peace with the English, by abandoning his ally. Life of Ameer Khan, 271, 273.—W.

great alarm and confusion prevailed in Sindia's camp; for it was reported that the British army was near. On the morning of the 28th, Sindia and Holkar, with their respective forces, began to retreat with great precipitation; and pursued a difficult march, for several days, during which heat and want of water destroyed a great number of men, to Shahpore, a town in the direct route to Kotah, and distant from that place about fifty miles.

The resolution, which this retreat suggested to the Governor-General, was "To adopt the necessary measures for cantoning the army at its several fixed stations. In his judgment," he says, "this measure, properly arranged, might be expected to afford sufficient protection to the British possessions even in the event of war; and the best security for the preservation of peace would be," (not the system of defensive alliance, but) "such a distribution of the British armies as should enable them to act against the enemy with vigour and celerity, if Sindia should commence hostilities, or Holkar again attempt to disturb the tranquillity of the British territories. At the same time this arrangement would afford the means of effecting a material reduction of the heavy charges incident to a state of war." Yet he had argued, in defence of the former war, that to keep the British army in a state of vigilance would be nearly as expensive as a state of war.

On the 10th of May, Sindia and Holkar re-commenced their retreat to Kotah; while the demand was still evaded of the English Resident for leave to depart from Sindia's camp. The opinion entertained by the Governor-General of the state of Sindia's

councils, at the time when he arranged the cantonment of the British troops, is thus expressed, in his own words:—"The weakness and the indolence of Sindia's personal character, combined with his habits of levity and debauchery, have gradually subjected him to the uncontrolled influence of his minister, Serjee Rao Ghautka, a person of the most profligate principles, and whose cruelty, violence, and abandoned conduct, have rendered him odious to whatever remains of respectable among the chiefs attached to Sindia. Ghautka's personal views, and irregular and disorderly disposition, are adverse to the establishment of Sindia's government upon any settled basis of peace and order. Ghautka is therefore an enemy to the treaty of alliance subsisting between Dowlut Rao Sindia and the Honourable Company. Under the guidance of such perverse councils the interests of Dowlut Rao Sindia have actually been sacrificed by Ghautka to those of Jeswunt Rao Holkar; and it appears by the report of the acting Resident, contained in his despatch of the 9th of May, that in the absence of Serjee Rao Ghautka, the functions of the administration are actually discharged by Jeswunt Rao Holkar."

With respect to Holkar, the Governor-General was of opinion, that his turbulent disposition and predatory habits would never allow him to submit to restraint, "excepting only in the last extremity of ruined fortune:" And that, as no terms of accommodation, such as he would accept, could be offered to him, without the appearance of concession, no arrangement with him ought to be thought of, except on terms previously solicited by himself, and such as

1805.

would deprive him of the means of disturbing the possessions of the British government and its allies.

He predicted, and there was abundant reason for the anticipation, that the confederacy between Holkar and Sindia would be of short duration. In that case, provided Sindia abstained from actual aggression upon the British state or its allies, the existing treaty of peace might still, he thought, be preserved.[1]

About the beginning of June, the confederate chieftains proceeded in a westerly direction towards Ajmere. For the countenance or aid they had received, or might be expected to receive, in that quarter, from the petty princes who had entered into the Governor-General's system of alliance, that Governor provided the following legitimate apology:—"The conduct of the petty chiefs of Hindostan, and of the Rajpoot states, must necessarily be regulated by the progress of events. None of these chiefs possesses singly the power of resisting the forces of the confederates, and any effectual combination among those chiefs is rendered impracticable by the nature of their tenures, by their respective views and prejudices, and by the insuperable operation of immemorial usages and customs. They are therefore compelled to submit to exactions enforced by the vicinity of a superior force, and their preservation and their interests are concerned in supporting the cause of that power, which, engaged in a contest with another state, appears to be successful, and in abstaining from any

[1] Printed papers, ut supra, No. 23; Extract of a Letter from the Governor-General 7th June, 1805, relative to Gualior and Gohud, with enclosures, p. 167—203; and a copy of a letter from ditto, 31st May, with enclosures, p. 5—148.—M. Dispatches, iv. 535.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

opposition to either of the belligerent powers which possesses the means of punishing their resistance.[1] In contracting alliances with the petty states of Hindustan the British government has never entertained the vain expectation of deriving from them the benefits of an active opposition to the power of the Mahratta chieftains, or even of an absolute neutrality, excepting under circumstances which should enable us to protect them against the power of the enemy. At the same time the actual or expected superiority and success of the confederates can alone induce those states to unite their exertions with those of the enemy in active operations against the British power." It is not easy to see, what utility could exist in alliances, of which these were to be the only results.[2]

In the early part of June, intelligence was transmitted to the Governor-General by the Resident in Sindia's camp, whom Sindia, in spite of reiterated applications, had still detained, of the probability of an important change in the councils of that chieftain,

[1] Compare with these grounds of action, those laid down by Mr. Hastings, in regard to the Rohillas.

[2] This supposes that no advantage is to be derived from a liberal policy. The British power stood in no need of the aid of the petty Rajpoot and Mahratta princes of Hindustan; but the latter stood in urgent need of the protection of a powerful and benevolent state against the lawless and merciless exactions and cruelties of such freebooters as Jeswunt Rao Holkar and Ameer Khan, and even Sindia himself. To yield them protection was an act of humanity and of policy, for it secured the tranquillity of India, and all the benefits which could not fail to result from a friendly and safe international exchange of the products of prosperity. Although not necessary, also, it cannot be denied that the command and direction of the resources of a number of small states, exercised by a great one, contribute to the resources and strength of the latter. Once confident of the ability and the will of the British power to yield them protection, the petty states of Hindustan have been ready enough to enlist under its banners and reinforce its armies.—W.

by the dismission of Serjee Rao Ghautka, the minister, and the appointment of Ambajee in his stead. Though it appeared that the ascendency of Holkar in the councils of Sindia was the cause of the expected change,[1] the Governor-General was disposed to believe that it increased all the probabilities of a speedy dissolution of the confederacy; as Ambajee, it was likely, would favour the projects of Holkar no longer than necessity required.

On the 17th of June, the acting Resident delivered to Sindia a letter from the Commander-in-Chief, declaring, that if he were not permitted to quit the camp in ten days, the relations subsisting between the two states would be regarded as no longer binding on the British government. In some supposed inconsistency in the letters of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, Sindia found a pretext for delay, requiring time to apply for elucidation to the Commander-in-Chief.

All pretext on this ground being removed, the Governor-General concluded, that, if Sindia any longer persisted in his refusal to dismiss the Resident, it was a sufficient proof of the necessity of war; and if war had become necessary, that it should not be delayed. Instructions were, therefore, addressed to the Commander-in-Chief, by which he was directed to be prepared for active operations against the confederate forces of Sindia and Holkar, as soon as the season should admit.

On the 27th of June, the last of the days allowed

[1] This was a mistake; it was the resentment of Ambajee against Holkar that gave him weight with Sindia, he, himself, having cause to regret his union with that chief, and to dread its consequences.—W.

to precede the departure of the Resident agreeably to the demand of the Commander-in-Chief, he was visited by one of the principal servants of Sindia. The object of the conference was, to prevail upon the Resident to wave his demand of dismission. On this occasion, the strongest professions of amicable intentions with respect to the British government were made on the part of Sindia; and his extreme reluctance to part with the Resident was ascribed to the appearance which would thence arise of enmity between the states; while he would by no means allow, that detention could be considered as a sufficient motive for war.[1]

Thus stood the relations between the British state and the Mahratta chiefs, when the Marquis Cornwallis arrived in India. In the month of December, 1803, the Marquis Wellesley had notified to the Court of Directors his intention of resigning the government of India, and of returning to Europe, as soon as the negotiations with Dowlut Rao Sindia, and the Raja of Berar, should be conducted to a conclusion. The hostilities, in which the Company became involved with Holkar, induced him to defer the execution of his intentions; and, even in the month of March, 1805, though he expressed his increasing solicitude, in the declining state of his health, to be relieved from the cares and toils of government, and to return to a more genial climate, he declared his resolution not to abandon his post, till the tranquillity and order of the British empire

[1] Dispatch of the Governor-General, dated 30th July, 1805, with its enclosures, No. 23, ut supra, p. 227—248.—M. Dispatches, iv. 602. Also vol. v. p. 155, 244.—W.

1805.

in India should rest on a secure and permanent basis.[1] Before this time, however, measures had been contemplated in England for a change in the administration of India. The Directors, and the Ministry themselves, began to be alarmed at the accumulation of the Indian debt, and the pecuniary difficulties which pressed upon the Company. Lord Wellesley was regarded as a very expensive and ambitious ruler; the greater part of his administration had been a scene of war and conquest; war and conquest in India had been successfully held forth to the British nation, as at once hostile to the British interests, and cruel to the people of India; with a ruler, possessing the dispositions of Lord Wellesley, it was supposed, that the chances of war would always outnumber the chances for peace; the popular voice, which often governs the cabinets of princes, ascribed a character of moderation and sageness to the Marquis Cornwallis; and to those who longed for peace and an overflowing exchequer in India it appeared, that the return of this nobleman would afford a remedy for every disorder. Though bending under years and infirmities, his own judgment, and that of the parties on whom the choice depended, succeeded in sending him, in the prospect, to a probable, in the event, to an actual, grave,

He arrived at Calcutta on the 30th of July, 1805, and on the same day took the oaths in Council, and assumed the government. On the 1st of August he announced this event to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, in an overland despatch; in which

[1] No. 23, ut supra, p. 253.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

he added, "Finding, to my great concern, that we are still at war with Holkar, and that we can hardly be said to be at peace with Sindia, I have determined to proceed immediately to the upper provinces, that I may be at hand to avail myself of the interval which the present rainy season must occasion in our military operations, to endeavour, if it can be done without a sacrifice of our honour, to terminate, by negotiation, a contest, in which the most brilliant success can afford us no solid benefit, and which, if it should continue, must involve us in pecuniary difficulties which we shall hardly be able to surmount."

The extent of the condemnation, thus speedily pronounced on the policy of his predecessor, was somewhat equivocal. The meaning might be, either that so much success had already been gained in the contest, that no *further* success would be of any advantage; or, that it was a contest, in which from the beginning "the most brilliant success could afford no solid benefit."[1]

Lord Cornwallis lost no time in commencing his journey to the upper provinces. In a letter of his, dated on the river, August 9th, 1805, he informed the Court of Directors, that "one of the first objects to which his attention had been directed, was, an inquiry into the state of their finances. The result," he says, "of this inquiry affords the most discouraging prospects; and has convinced me, that unless some very speedy measures are taken to reduce our

[1] It can scarcely be thought that the latter explanation was intended. To the actual state of the contest it was not inapplicable. Nothing was to be gained from Holkar; and there was no object desired in further reducing the power of Sindia.—W.

expenses, it will be impossible to meet with effect the contingency of a renewed war with Sindia and those powers who may be disposed to confederate with him." The only source of relief to which it appeared that he could have immediate recourse, was the reduction of as many as possible of the irregular troops.

Among the measures of Lord Wellesley, already described, for reducing the power of the Mahratta princes at the commencement of the war, was that of encouraging, by offers of engagement in the British service, the officers employed by those princes, to desert with their troops. The number of those who came over to the British service became at last very considerable; and the expense exceedingly severe. Measures had been taken to lessen the burden, before the close of the late administration; and the expense had been reduced from the sum of 5,83,669 rupees per month, to that of 3,90,455. The expense appeared, and with justice, in so very serious a light to Lord Cornwallis, that the troops in question he declared, "would certainly be less formidable if opposed to the British government in the field, than while they remained so distressing a drain upon its resources." A formidable impediment, however, opposed the dismission even of those to whom the faith of the government was in no degree pledged; because their pay was several months in arrear, as well as that of the rest of the army, and there was no money in the treasury for its discharge. In this exigency the Governor-General resolved to retain the treasures which the Directors had sent for China; and apprized them of this intention by his letter,

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

dated on the 9th of August. In another letter, dated on the 28th of the same month, he says, "I have already represented to your Honourable Committee, the extreme pecuniary embarrassments in which I have found this government involved; every part of the army, and every branch of the public departments attached to it, even in their present stationary positions, are suffering severe distress, from an accumulation of arrears; and if, unfortunately, it should become indispensably necessary to put the troops again in motion, I hardly know how the difficulties of providing funds for such an event are to be surmounted."[1]

The next part of the late system of government, in which the Governor-General thought it necessary to interfere, was the scheme of alliances. On that subject his sentiments differed widely from those of the ruler who had gone before him.

In a letter dated the 20th of July, 1805, Colonel Close, Resident at Poona, had stated to the Governor-General, that he had obtained an interview with one of the principal officers of the Peshwa's government, "with whom," says he, "I conversed largely on the present distracted conduct of the Poona government; pointing out to him, that, owing to the want of capacity and good intention on the part of the Dewan, the Peshwa, instead of enjoying that ease of mind and honourable comfort, which his alliance with the British government was calculated to bestow upon

[1] Copies of all letters from the late Marquis Cornwallis, &c. ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 19th February, 1808, p. 3, 4, and 6. For the reduction of their regular troops by Lord Wellesley, see the letter of the Commander-in-Chief, No. 23, ut supra, p. 243.

him, was kept in a constant state of anxiety, either by remonstrances necessarily made to his Dewan by the British Resident, or by the disobedience and wicked conduct of the persons placed by the Dewan in the civil and military charge of his Highness's territories, which, instead of yielding a revenue for his Highness's treasury, went only to maintain a set of abandoned men, whose first object is obtaining authority to assemble bands of freebooters, and who then, acting for themselves, hold his Highness's government at defiance."

A despatch from the Marquis Cornwallis to Colonel Close, signed by the secretary to Government, and dated on the river near Plassey, the 18th of August, 1805, says, "The information which the Governor-General has obtained since his Lordship's arrival at Fort William, respecting the state of affairs at the court of Poona, and especially the communications contained in your despatches above acknowledged, have enabled his Lordship to form a correct judgment of the condition of his Highness the Peshwa's government. His Lordship observes, with deep concern, the utter inefficiency of the Peshwa's authority, to maintain the allegiance and subordination of his officers and subjects; to secure the resources of his country; or to command the services of his troops. His Highness is compelled to solicit the interference of the British government, to repress civil commotion among the public officers of his government, and to provide the means of paying the troops which, by treaty, he is pledged to furnish for the service of the war. His Highness himself, solicitous only of personal ease and security, seems disposed to leave to

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

the British government the internal regulation of his dominions, and the suppression of that anarchy and confusion which is the necessary result of a weak and inefficient government.—We are thus reduced to the alternative, either of mixing in all the disorder and contentions, incident to the loose and inefficient condition of the Peshwa's administration; or of suffering the government and dominion of his Highness to be completely overthrown by the unrestrained effects of general anarchy and rebellion.—Under such circumstances the alliance with the Peshwa, far from being productive of any advantage to the Company, must involve us in inextricable difficulty, and become an intolerable burden upon us."

The Governor-General alludes to certain circumstances; but the question is, whether these very circumstances are not the natural result of such an alliance, not with the Peshwa exclusively, but any one of the native states; and whether there is any rational medium between abstinence from all connexion with these states, and the avowed conquest of them; the complete substitution, at once, of the British government to their own wretched system of misrule.

The Governor-General recurs to his former opinions respecting the impolicy of all connexion with the Mahratta states; opinions of which the reason was not confined to the Mahratta states; and he says, "It must be in your recollection, that, during Marquis Cornwallis's former administration, his Lordship, foreseeing the evils of mixing in the labyrinth of Mahratta politics, and Mahratta contentions, sedulously avoided that sort of connexion with the

Peshwa's government, which was calculated to involve the Company in the difficulties and embarrassments of our actual situation. The evils, however, which his Lordship then anticipated from such an alliance, appear to his Lordship to have been exceeded by those which have actually occurred under the operation of the treaty of Bassein."

The views of Lord Cornwallis were less clear and decided with regard to the Nizam, although his observations, addressed to the Resident at Hyderabad, under date the 21st of August, 1805, announced the existence of the same evils, resulting from the alliance with the Nizam, as resulted from that with the Peshwa; that is, a total dissolution of the energies of government, in the hands of the native prince, and the necessity, on the part of the British, of exercising all the functions of government under infinite disadvantages. "The Governor-General," says that address, "observes, with great regret, the degree of interference exercised by the British government, through the channels of its representative, in the internal administration of the government of Hyderabad. It appears to his Lordship to have entirely changed the nature of the relations originally established between the British government and the state of Hyderabad. His Lordship is aware, that this undesirable degree of interference and ascendency in the councils of the state of Hyderabad, is to be ascribed to the gradual decay of the energies of government; to the defect of efficient instruments of authority; to the circumstances which attended the nomination of the present ministers; and to the personal character of his Highness Secunder Jah.—

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

But the evils, which appear to his Lordship to be the necessary result of such a system of interference and paramount ascendency in the government of Hyderabad, greatly exceed those which the maintenance of that system is calculated to prevent.—The former are of a nature more extensive and more durable; and affect the general interests and character of the British government, throughout the whole peninsula of India. The evils of an opposite system are comparatively local and temporary; although rendered more dangerous at the present moment, by the probable effects of a belief which, however unjust, appears to be too generally entertained, of a systematic design on the part of the British government to establish its control and authority over every state in India.—It is the primary object of his Lordship's policy to remove this unfavourable and dangerous impression, by abstaining in the utmost degree practicable, consistently with the general security of the Company's dominions, from all interference in the internal concerns of other states. His Lordship considers even the preservation of our actual alliances to be an object of inferior importance to that of regaining the confidence, and removing the jealousies and suspicions of surrounding states."

In terms exactly correspondent, the Governor-General wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors. In a letter enclosing the above despatches, dated on the river near Raj Mahl, on the 28th of August, he says; "One of the most important, and, in my opinion, not the least unfortunate consequences of the subsisting state of our alliance has been the gradual, increasing ascendency of the

British influence and authority, exercised through the medium of our Residents, at the courts of Poona and Hyderabad. The weak and wretched state of the Peshwa's internal government cannot be more forcibly described than in the enclosed despatch, recently received from Colonel Close. And I have reason to believe, that the authority of the Soubah of the Deccan over his dominions is approaching fast to the same state of inefficiency and weakness. The evils likely to ensue from the above statement are sufficiently obvious; but the remedy to be applied to them is unhappily not so apparent.—In the hope, that by degrees, we may be able to withdraw ourselves from the disgraceful participation in which we should be involved, by mixing ourselves in all the intrigues, oppression, and chicanery of the active management of distracted and dislocated provinces, I have ordered those letters to be addressed to the Residents at the courts of Hyderabad and Poona, of which copies are herewith enclosed."[1]

The conduct which Lord Cornwallis determined to pursue in regard to the relations between the British state and the belligerent or contumacious chiefs, Holkar and Sindia, was lastly disclosed. His sentiments on that subject, were addressed in a despatch to General, then Lord Lake, on the 18th of September.

In this he declared that "the first, and most important object of his attention was, a satisfactory adjustment of all differences between the British government and Dowlut Rao Sindia." To the

[1] Papers, ut supra, ordered to be printed 19th of February, 1808, p. 5. —18.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

accomplishment of this primary object of his desire he conceived that two things only operated in the character of material obstructions; the detention by Sindia of the British Resident; and the retention, by the British government, of the fortress of Gualior, and the province of Gohud.

The British Governor had made up his mind with regard to both causes of dissension. With regard to the first, he says, " I deem it proper to apprize your Lordship, that as a mere point of honour, I am disposed to compromise, or even to abandon, the demand which has been so repeatedly, and so urgently made, for the release of the Britsh Residency, if it should ultimately prove to be the only obstacle to a satisfactory adjustment of affairs with Dowlut Rao Sindia." With regard to the second, he says, " It is, in my decided opinion, desirable to abandon our possession of Gualior, and our connexion with Gohud, independently of any reference to a settlement of differences with Dowlut Rao Sindia: I have, therefore, no hesitation in resolving to transfer to Dowlut Rao Sindia the possession of that fortress and territory."

This accordingly formed the basis of the scheme of pacification planned by the Governor-General. On his part, Sindia was to be required to resign his claim to the jaghires and pensions, stipulation for which had been made in the preceding treaty; to make a provision for the Rana of Gohud to the extent of two and a half, or three lacs of rupees per annum; and to make compensation for the loss sustained by the plunder of the residency: On the other hand, the Jyenegur tribute, amounting to the annual

sum of three lacs of rupees, might be restored to Sindia; and leave might be given him, to station a force in Dholepoor Baree, and Raja Kerree, the districts reserved to him in the Doab, as the private estates of his family..

With regard to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, Cornwallis declared it to be his intention to restore to that chieftain the whole of the territories and possessions which had been conquered from him by the British arms.

Two important subjects of regulation yet remained; those minor princes in the region of the Jumna, with whom the British government had formed connexions: and the territory to the westward and southward of Delhi, of which that government had not yet disposed. The plan of the Governor-General was, to give up both. He purposed to divide the territory among the princes with whom the British government had formed connexions; and to reconcile those princes to the renunciation of the engagements which the British government had contracted with them, by the allurement of the territory which they were about to receive. His plan was to assign jaghires, in proportion to their claims, to those of least consideration; and to divide the remainder between the Rajas of Macherry and Bhurtpore. He meant that the British government should remain wholly exempt from any obligation to ensure or defend the possession of the territories which it thus conferred. He expressed a hope that those princes, by means of a union among themselves, might, in the reduced condition of Sindia, have sufficient power for their own defence. "But even the probability,"

BOOK VI. CHAP. 13.

1805.

he adds, " of Sindia's ultimate success would not, in my opinion, constitute a sufficient objection to the proposed arrangement; being satisfied of the expediency even of admitting into the territories in question the power of Dowlut Rao. Sindia, rather than that we should preserve any control over, or connexion with them." Any attempt of Sindia, in any circumstances, against the British possessions in the Doab, he pronounced to be altogether improbable. And " Sindia's endeavours," he said, " to wrest their territories from the hands of the Rajas of Macherry and Bhurtpore may be expected to lay the foundation of interminable contests, which will afford ample and permanent employment to Sindia."

In the spirit of these instructions, a letter to Sindia had been penned on the preceding day; intended to inform him that, as soon as he should release the British Residency, Lord Lake was authorized to open with him a negotiation, for the conclusion of an arrangement, by which Gualior and Gohud might revert to his dominion.[1]

Before these letters were received by the Commander-in-Chief, the dismission of Serjee Rao Gautka from the office of minister to Sindia, and the appointment of Ambajee, had for some time taken place. This event the British rulers ascribed to the disappointment of Sindia, in the hopes with which they supposed that Serjee Rao Gautka had nourished him, of finding in the union with Holkar a force with which the English might be opposed, Upon the dismission of Serjee Rao Gautka from

[1] Papers, (1806) ut supra, No. 11, p. 6—12.

the service of Sindia, he repaired to the camp of Holkar, which for some time had been separated from that of Sindia. It was the interest, however, of Holkar, to preserve a connexion with Sindia, which the latter was now very desirous to dissolve. Holkar offered to give no asylum to the discarded minister, who in a short time left his camp, and repaired to the Deccan. Sindia played the double part, so agreeable to eastern politics; and temporized with Holkar till he felt assured of a favourable adjustment of the subjects of difference between him and the British state.

Moonshee Kavel Nyne was one of the confidential servants of Sindia, who had been opposed to Serjee Rao Gautka, and of course leaned to the British interests. During the ascendency of Serjee Rao Gautka, Moonshee Kavel Nyne, from real or apprehended dread of violence, had fled from the dominions of Sindia; and had taken shelter under the British government at Delhi. Upon the first intimation, from the new Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief, of the altered tone of politics which was about to be introduced, Moonshee Kavel Nyne was invited to the camp of the Commander-in-Chief; where it was concerted, that one of his relations should speak to Sindia, and explain to him the facility with which, through the medium of Moonshee Kavel Nyne, he might open a negotiation, calculated to save him from the dangers with which he was encompassed. Sindia was eager to embrace the expedient, and immediately sent proposals through the medium of Kavel Nyne. By this contrivance the British commander stood upon the vantage

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

ground; and stated, that he could attend to no proposition, while the British Residency was detained.[1] Upon this communication, the Residency was dismissed; and was upon its march to the British territories, while the Commander-in-Chief had forwarded to Sindia a plan of settlement, fashioned a little according to the views of the Governor-General, before the Governor-General's instructions of the 19th of September, and his letter to Sindia, arrived in the British camp.

Impressed by dread of the effects, which the manifestation of so eager a desire for peace, and the appearance of indecision in the British councils, if, one proposal being sent, another should immediately follow, might produce upon Mahratta minds; while at the same time he was strongly persuaded of the impolicy of the measures which the Governor-General had enjoined; the Commander-in-Chief took upon himself to detain the letter addressed to Sindia, and to represent to the Governor-General the views which operated upon his mind.

Apologizing for the interposition of any delay in carrying the commands of the Governor-General into effect, by the alteration which had taken place in the state of affairs; and announcing the actual transmission of a plan of settlement which it was probable that Sindia

[1] By this seasonable show of policy, some of the mischief which was likely to have arisen from Lord Cornwallis's impatience to conclude a peace, in which he would have waved insisting upon the Resident's release, and allowed Sindia to station an armed force of his own in the districts in the Doab, were obviated. Such a precipitancy would have been interpreted by Sindia as a proof of the weakness of the British Government, and would have encouraged him to have been still more insolent and exacting in his demands.—W.

would accept, the Commander-in-Chief proceeded to represent; first, that it would be inconsistent with the interests of the British state to let the Mahrattas regain a footing in the upper provinces of India; secondly, that it would be inconsistent with the justice and honour of the British state to relinquish the engagements which it had formed with the minor princes on the Mahratta frontier.

1. If the Mahrattas were thrown back from the Company's frontier, to the distance originally planned, a strong barrier would be interposed against them in every direction. To the north-west, the countries of Hurrianah, Bicaneer, Jodepore, and the northern parts of Jeypore, and the Shekawutee, dry, sandy, mountainous, and inhabited by a warlike race, could not be crossed by a hostile army without the greatest difficulty and loss. The roads further south, by Mewat or Bhurtpore, somewhat less impassable, but more than 150 miles in length to the Jumna, through a country with many difficult passes, strong towns, and a warlike and predatory population, would, under a union with the chiefs in that direction, and a well-established line of defence on the part of the British government, be impracticable to a Mahratta army. Though from the southern part of the territories of Bhurtpore to the junction of the Chumbul with the Jumna, the approach from Malwa presented little difficulty, this line was short; the number of fords so far down the Jumna was much less than higher up; and a British corps, well posted, would afford, in this direction, all the security which could be desired.

If the princes in this region were for a while protected by the British government, they would recover

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

from that state of disunion, poverty, and weakness, into which they had been thrown, partly by the policy, partly by the vices of the Mahratta governments. If abandoned to themselves, they would soon be all subdued, either by Sindia, or some other conquering hero; and a state of things would be introduced, in the highest degree unfavourable to the interests of the British government. "These petty states would first quarrel with each other; would then call in the different native powers in their vicinity, to their respective aid; and large armies of irregulars would be contending upon the frontier of our most fertile provinces; against whose eventual excesses there would be no well-grounded security but a military force in a state of constant preparation." The military habits of the people would thus be nourished, instead of those habits of peaceful industry, which it was found by experience they were so ready to acquire. The Jumna, which it was the intention of the Governor-General to make the boundary of the British dominions, was not, as had been supposed, a barrier of any importance; as above its junction with the Chumbul, except during a few weeks in the year, it is fordable in a variety of places, and would afford little security from the incursions of a predatory army, to the provinces in the Doab, to Rohilcund, or the countries of the Vizir

2. The personages on the further side of the Jumna; Rajas, Zemindars, Jaghiredars, and others; to whom the British faith had been formally pledged, were numerous. From that pledge the British faith could not be released, unless the opposite party

either infringed the conditions of the engagement, or freely allowed it to be dissolved. "I am fully satisfied," says the Commander-in-Chief, "that no inducement whatever would make the lesser Rajas in this quarter renounce the benefit of the protection of the British government. Even such a proposition would excite in their minds the utmost alarm. They would, I fear, consider it as a prelude to their being sacrificed to the object of obtaining a peace with the Mahrattas."

With regard to the Rana of Gohud, he expressed himself convinced of the utter incapacity of that feeble-minded person for the business of government; and, with respect to him, objected not to the arrangement which the Governor-General proposed.

Before the Governor-General received this remonstrance, he was incapable of discharging the functions of government. His health was impaired when he left England; and from the commencement of his journey from Calcutta, had rapidly declined. On the 29th of September, he had become too ill to proceed, and was removed from his boats to a house in Gazeepore, a town in the district of Benares, at which he had arrived. Accounts were despatched to the Presidency, with intelligence that he could not survive many days. The evil consequences to which the state was exposed, by the absurdity of those, who, at an eventful period, sent a man to govern India, just stepping into the grave, without the smallest provision for an event so probable as his death, began now to be seen. Two members alone of the Supreme Council, Sir George Barlow, and Mr. Udney, remained at Calcutta. "Under the

BOOK VI. CHAP. 13.

1805.

embarrassing circumstances," says Sir George, "attendant on this heavy calamity, it has been judged to be for the good of the public service, that I should proceed immediately, by relays, to Benares, to join his Lordship, for the purpose of assisting in the conduct of the negotiations for peace commenced by his Lordship, if his indisposition should continue; or of prosecuting the negotiations to a conclusion, in the ever-to-be-deplored event of his Lordship's death. The public service necessarily requires the presence of Lord Lake with the army in the field; and as no provision has been made by the legislature for the very distressing and embarrassing situation in which we are unhappily placed by the indisposition of Lord Cornwallis, at a crisis when the public interests demand the presence of a competent authority near the scene of the depending negotiations, I have been compelled, by my sense of public duty, to leave the charge of that branch of the administration, which must be conducted at Fort William, in the hands of one member of the government. My justification for the adoption of this measure will, I trust, be found in the unprecedented nature of the case, and in the pressing exigency which calls me from the Presidency."

It so happened, that affairs at that time were easy to be arranged; and fell into hands of considerable skill.[1] It was very possible, they might have

[1] It is rather inconsistent after describing the differences of opinion that existed, to affirm that affairs at the time of Lord Cornwallis's death were easy to be arranged. The course to be followed was, at Lord Wellesley's departure, simple enough, but it had become complicated and embarrassed by the new and conflicting views of his successor. Neither can much credit for skill be given to those into whose hands the management of

been of difficult arrangement; and highly probable, when left to chance, that they would have fallen into hands incapable of the task. Of sending a dying man to govern India, without foreseeing the chance of his death, how many evils, in that case, might have been the direful consequence?[1]

Lord Cornwallis lingered to the 5th of October, and then expired. During the last month he remained, for the greatest part of the morning, in a state of weakness approaching to insensibility. Till near the last he revived a little towards the evening; was dressed, heard the despatches, and gave instructions for the letters which were to be written. By the persons who attended him, it was stated, that even in this condition his mind displayed a considerable portion of its original force.[2] Without reminding ourselves of the partiality of these reporters, and going so far as to admit the possibility of the force which is spoken of, we cannot help seeing that it could exert itself on those subjects only with which the mind was already familiar. Where was the strength to perform the process of fresh inquiry; to collect, and to fix in the mind the knowledge necessary to lay the basis of action in a state of things to a great degree new?

The duties and rank of Supreme Ruler devolved,

affairs fell after the death of the Governor-General, as their sole object was to get quit of present difficulties at any cost, even at the sacrifice of the national power and credit. This was cutting, not disentangling the Gordian knot, and evinced little prudence or judgment in the operators. —W.

[1] Papers, (1806) ut supra, No. 11, p. 5—13; No. 17; and No. 25, p. 3 and 4.

[2] Malcolm's Sketch, p. 413.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

of course, on Sir George Barlow, a civil servant of the Company, who had ascended with reputation through the several gradations of office, to the dignity of senior member of the Supreme Council, when Lord Cornwallis expired. The new Governor-General lost no time in making reply to the representation which the Commander-in-Chief had addressed to Lord Cornwallis, immediately before his death. He stated his resolution to adhere to the plan of his predecessor, in "abandoning all connexion with the petty states, and, generally, with the territories to the westward of the Jumna." "This resolution," he added, "is founded, not only upon my knowledge of the entire conformity of those general principles to the provisions of the legislature, and to the orders of the Honourable the Court of Directors; but also upon my conviction of their expediency, with a view to the permanent establishment of the British interests in India."

1. With respect to the *security*, which, in the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief, would be sacrificed to this policy, Sir George observed, that it was the declared resolution, even of Marquis Wellesley, "to render, generally, the Jumna the boundary of the British possessions north of Bundelcund, retaining such posts, and such an extent of country on the right bank of that river, as might appear to be necessary for the purposes of effectual defence." The security of the British empire must, he said, be derived from one or other of two sources; either, first, from establishing a controlling power over all the states of India; or, secondly, from the contentions and wars, sure to prevail among those states, if left to them-

selves, combined with efficient measures of defence on the part of the British government itself. With regard to the first of these sources, "such a system of control," he observed, "must, in its nature, be progressive, and must ultimately tend to a system of universal dominion." After this important observation, bearing so directly on Lord Wellesley's favourite scheme of subsidiary alliance, he added, "It must be obvious to your Lordship, that the prosecution of this system is inconsistent, not only with the provisions of the legislature, but with the general principles of policy which this government has uniformly professed to maintain."[1] The line of the Jumna, he thought, might be rendered an effectual barrier against predatory incursions, or serious attack, by forming a chain of military posts on the banks of that river, from Calpee to the northern extremity of the British frontier, and retaining, for that purpose, upon the right bank of the Jumna, through the whole of that extent, a tract of land, not exceeding, generally, eight or ten miles in breadth, subject to the operation of the British laws.

[1] The security of the British power of India was, therefore, made by Sir G. Barlow to depend upon no more permanent or honourable a foundation than the quarrels of the neighbouring potentates. Consistently with this doctrine it should have been the policy of the British Government to foment intestine dissension, and to perpetuate not tranquillity but hostilities amongst the native states. That such a nefarious practice was not adopted may be believed, but it was scarcely less culpable to look on unconcerned, and suffer those horrors to prevail which it was in the power, whenever it was in the pleasure of the Government of British India to arrest. The scheme of Lord Wellesley may have been chimerical—may have involved consequences which were not foreseen, but it was benevolent and magnanimous. The cold and selfish policy of suffering the princes of India to tear each other to pieces, without interposing to prevent them, savours neither of benevolence nor magnanimity.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

2. To show that the faith was not binding which the British had pledged for the protection of various chiefs, the Governor-General employed the following argument:—That the British government was not bound to keep in its own possession the territory in which these chiefs were situated, or on which they were dependent: And if it surrendered the territory, it dissolved the engagement which it had formed to protect them. Those particular persons, to whom pecuniary or territorial assignments had been promised, might be provided for by jaghires, in the territory held on the right bank of the Jumna.[1]

Early in the month of September, Holkar, with the main body of his army, moved from Ajmere, in a north-westerly direction, toward the country of the Seiks. He entered the Shekawutee, with about twelve thousand horse, a small body of ill-equipped infantry, and about thirty guns, of various calibres, most of them unfit for service. Skirting the country of the Raja of Macherry, and the province of Rewarree, he proceeded to Dadree; where he left his infantry, guns, and about a thousand horse, under one of his

[1] Letter of Sir George Barlow, dated on the river near Chunar, 20th Oct. 1805; Papers, ut supra, No. 18, p. 5—7.—M.

According to Lord Lake's letter of the 7th October, many of the petty Rajas and chiefs thus situated had not become subjects of the British Government only by being occupants of the territory at the time it was conquered, and, therefore, transferable with it when it was surrendered. They had to a still greater extent been put in possession of lands out of the conquered territory, in admission of disputed claims, or in reward for actual services. Of these claims and rewards granted by the British Government, they were almost certain of being deprived upon the restoration of the Mahratta authorities, and the pretended bounty or equity of the British was not only frustrated, but exposed its objects to the resentment and injustice of the public enemy. Its protection should never have been given, or it should never have been withdrawn.—W.

chiefs. This chief, in conjunction with the Raja of Neemrana, one of the districts to the south-west of Delhi, ceded to the British government by the treaty of peace with Sindia, proceeded to ravage the British territories. Holkar himself, with the main body of his cavalry, proceeded towards Patiala, giving out his expectation of being joined by the chiefs of the Seiks, and even by the King of Caubul.[1] The Commander-in-Chief took measures, with his usual promptitude, for not only defeating the schemes of the enemy, but rendering the desperate enterprise in which he had now engaged, the means of his speedy destruction. A force, consisting of three battalions, and eight companies of native infantry, eight six-pounders, and two corps, exceeding two thousand, of irregular horse, with four galloper guns, was appointed to take up a position at Nernoul. Another force, consisting of three battalions of regular, and three of irregular, native infantry, with two thousand of the best irregular horse, was sent to Rewarree, where, aided by the troops of the Raja of Macherry, it would maintain tranquillity, cut off the communication of the enemy with Ajmere and Malwa, and prevent him from retreating in the route by which he had advanced. Major-General Jones, with the army under his command, received orders to advance to-

[1] Ameer Khan also asserts that the Raja of Pateeala and Runjit Sing invited Holkar and Ameer Khan to enter into engagements with them, promising if they came to that quarter they should be well received, and all would make common cause against the general enemy. It is not likely they would have entered the Punjab without some encouragement, but that encouragement was apparently partial and undecided. The Khan admits that they had some difficulty in prevailing on Runjit Sing to countenance them. Life, p. 274.—W.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

wards the Shekawutee, with a view to secure the defeat of the enemy's infantry, and the capture of his guns; a loss which would not only sink his reputation, but deprive him of the means of subsisting his cavalry during the period of the rains. And the Commander-in-Chief, with the cavalry of the army, and a small reserve of infantry, proceeded from Muttra, about the middle of October, to give chase to Holkar himself, in whatever direction he might proceed.[1]

In the mean time, the negotiation between the British government and Sindia was conducted, under the auspices of Lord Lake, on the part of Sindia, by Moonshee Kavel Nyne, on the part of the British government, by Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm, the political agent of the Governor-General in the British camp. On the 23rd of November, the treaty was concluded and signed. Of defensive, or any other alliance, the name was not introduced. Of the treaty of peace, concluded through General Wellesley at Surjee Anjengaum, every part was to remain in force, except so much as should be altered by the present agreement. Gualior, and the greatest part of Gohud, were ceded; not, however, as due by the preceding treaty, but from considerations of friendship. The river Chumbul, as affording a distinct line of demarcation, was declared to be the boundary between the two states. Sindia renounced the jaghires and pensions, as well as the districts held as private property, for which provision in his favour was made in the preceding treaty. The British government agreed to allow to himself, personally, an

[1] Papers, ut supra, No. 11, p. 15; and No. 25, p. 19, 20.

annual pension of four lacs of rupees; and to assign jaghires to his wife and daughter, the first of two lacs, the second of one lac of rupees, per annum, in the British territories in Hindustan. It also engaged to enter into no treaties with the Rajas of Oudipore, Jodepore, Kotah, and other chiefs, the tributaries of Sindia, in Malwa, Mewar or Merwar; and to interfere in no respect with the conquests made by Sindia from the Holkar family, between the rivers Taptee and Chumbul. The British government, high and mighty, held it fitting to insert an article in the treaty of peace, binding the Maharaja never to admit Sirjee Rao Gautka into his service or councils. "This article," says Colonel Malcolm, "was a complete vindication of our insulted honour." Truckling to the master, you struck a blow at the servant, who, in no possible shape, was responsible to you; and this you were pleased to consider as a vindication of honour!

As this treaty appeared to the Governor-General to impose upon the British government the obligation of protecting the states and chieftains, north of the Chumbul, from Kotah to the Jumna, he insisted that two declaratory articles should be annexed, by which that inconvenience might be wholly avoided.

During the negotiations, which preceded the signature of this treaty, Lord Lake was marching in pursuit of Holkar. That chieftain, from the day on which the British General took the field, continued merely to fly before him. Totally disappointed in his hopes of assistance from the Seik chiefs, and reduced at last to the extremity of distress, he sent

BOOK VI. CHAP. 13.

1805.

agents, with an application for peace, to the British camp. As the British commander had instructions to grant terms far more favourable than the enemy had any reason to expect, the negotiation was speedily terminated; and on the 24th of December, 1805, a treaty was signed at Raipoor Ghaut, on the banks of the river Beah, the ancient Hyphasis, to which Holkar had carried his flight.[1] By this treaty, Holkar renounced all his rights to every place on the northern side of the Chumbul; all his claims on Poonah and Bundelcund, and upon the British government, or its allies; and agreed not to entertain Europeans in his service, without the consent of the British government. On these conditions, he was allowed to return to his own dominions; but by a route prescribed, and without injuring the territory of the British government, or its allies. The British government, on

[1] Holkar and his associate had some time before arrived at Amritsir, and had been endeavouring to procure aid from Runjit Sing, whilst he had been endeavouring to employ their troops against a refractory tribe of Mohammedans, a measure to which Holkar had assented, being in great want of money, but which was opposed by Ameer Khan. All parties were mutually dissatisfied when Lord Lake arrived on the Beyah, and made an indirect attempt to open negotiations, the council at Calcutta having written to the General to offer terms, and bring the war to a close as soon as possible. Ameer Khan represents himself as urging the continuance of hostilities and recourse to Shah Shuja at Kabool, but Holkar was weary of the war, and the treaty was concluded. Of the terms originally granted to Holkar by Lord Lake, Ameer Khan says, "The Maharaja looked upon these terms as a God-send, and his agent, who was well acquainted with his inclinations and wishes, brought the paper with exultation." The further concessions made by Sir G. Barlow, Ameer Khan pretends to have been given by the English to remove his objections to the conclusion of peace. That he did oppose it violently for reasons of his own is true, as we learn from Major Thorn's account of his behaviour, but the concessions were made some time after all the parties had returned from the Punjab. War in India, 496. Life of Ameer Khan, 286.—W.

the other hand, agreed, not to interfere with any of the possessions or dependencies of Holkar, south of the Chumbul; and to restore the forts and territories captured by the British forces on the southern side of the rivers Taptee and Godavery. An article was inserted, by which Holkar was bound never to admit Serjee Rao Gautka into his council or service. This article, however, as well as the corresponding article in the treaty with Sindia, were, after a few months, annulled, in consequence of a report that Serjee Rao Gautka was about to join Holkar. In such a case, these articles might have created an embarrassment; "which, agreeably," says Sir John Malcolm, "to the policy of that day, it was deemed prudent to avoid."

Sir George Barlow made an alteration in this treaty, as he did in that with Sindia, which was sent to him for confirmation. The territories of Holkar, north of the Chumbul, would involve the British government in expense and trouble, either to guarantee or to keep them: He, therefore, annexed a clause, for leaving them to Holkar.

Acting upon his determination to break loose from the engagements, formed with the minor states and chieftains, between the Mahratta frontier and the Doab, the Governor-General disregarded the remonstrances which were made by the Commander-in-Chief, in favour, more especially, of the Raja of Boondee, and the Raja of Jyepore. Lord Lake represented, that the district of Boondee, though not material in point of extent, was highly important, as commanding a principal pass into the northern provinces of the British empire; that the Raja, steady

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

in his friendship, and eminent for his services to the British government, had excited the utmost rage of Holkar, to whom he was tributary, by the great aid which he had rendered to Colonel Monson, during his retreat; and that neither justice, nor honour, allowed him to be delivered over to the vengeance of his barbarous foe. The resolution of the Governor-General remained unchangeable, and by the article which he annexed to the treaty with Holkar, that chief was set free to do what he would with the Raja of Boondee.

The Raja of Jyepore had entered into the system of defensive alliance with the British state, at an early period of the war with Sindia; but, for a time, showed himself little disposed to be of any advantage; and Cornwallis, by a letter to the Commander-in-Chief of the 3rd of August, had directed the alliance to be treated as dissolved. At that time, however, the united armies of Sindia and Holkar were on the frontiers of Jyepore, and the Bombay army, which had marched to a place not far from the capital, was drawing most of its supplies from the territories of the Raja. In these circumstances, Lord Lake, before the receipt of the letter of Lord Cornwallis, had encouraged the Raja to found a claim for British protection on the services which it was now in his power to render. He had also prevailed upon Lord Cornwallis to suspend the dissolution of the alliance. When Holkar, during the month of October, passed to the north in the direction of Jyepore, Lord Lake had exhorted the Raja to discharge the duties of a faithful ally, under assurances of British protection; the Raja, on his part,

had joined the Bombay army under General Jones, and, by his aid, and the supplies derived from his country, had enabled that General to maintain a position of the greatest importance to the operations of the war; and if, according to expectation, Holkar had retreated in that direction, no doubt was entertained that effective assistance would have been received from the troops of the Raja. In the opinion, therefore, of the Commander-in-Chief, the Raja of Jyepore, who was exposed to a speedy attack from both Sindia and Holkar, the moment that British protection was withdrawn, could not be left exposed to their rapacity and vengeance, without a stain upon the British name. These expostulations altered not the resolution of Sir George Barlow, who considered the obligations of the British government as dissolved by the early appearances of disaffection on the part of the Raja, and not restored by his subsequent deserts. He would not even listen to the Commander-in-Chief, requesting that he would defer the renunciation of the alliance till the time when Holkar, who was pledged by the treaty to return immediately to his dominions, should have passed the territories of the Raja. On the contrary, he directed that the renunciation should be immediately declared, lest Holkar, in passing, should commit excesses, which, otherwise, it would be necessary for the British government to resent. Lord Lake was afterwards compelled to receive the bitter reproaches of the Raja, through the mouth of one of his agents, at Delhi.

Regarding the treaties with the Rajas of Macherry and Bhurtpore, as still imposing obligations upon

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

the British government, the Governor-General directed the Commander-in-Chief to enter into a negotiation with them; and to offer them considerable accessions of territory as a return for their consent to the dissolution of the alliance. But Lake, apprehending that even the rumour of any such intention on the part of the British government would again set loose the powers of uproar and destruction in that part of India, represented his apprehensions in such alarming colours, that Sir George, though he declared his resolution unchanged, disclaimed any desire for precipitation; and the Rajas of Bhurtpore and Macherry, with the chiefs in their vicinity, were not, at that time, deprived of the protection of the British power.[1]

[1] Collection of Treaties in India (published 1812), p. 290—297, Malcolm's Sketch, p. 406—436. On the negotiation of the new treaties with Sindia and Holkar, and on the discussions relative to the dissolution of the alliance with the minor states, the official documents, which have yet been printed, furnish scanty information. The supply afforded by Sir John Malcolm is peculiarly authentic, as he was the negotiator and agent, through whom almost every thing was transacted.—M.

Little difference of opinion now prevails upon the merits of this lame and impotent conclusion of hostilities with the Mahratta chiefs. Captain Grant (iii. 317) designates Sir G. Barlow's measures to have been as short-sighted and contracted as they were selfish and indiscriminating. Col. Malcolm dwells at some length upon the impolicy, and to their full extent, the impracticability of the principles by which the measures of the actual government were regulated (Political History, i. 373); Colonel Tod has forcibly illustrated the evils resulting from it, in the miseries which were in consequence inflicted upon Rajputana, (History of Rajasthan,) and the Marquis of Hastings, alluding to its principal feature, has characterized the condition of abstaining from the protection of the Rajput states as equally discreditable and embarrassing. (Summary of his administration, by the Marquis of Hastings.) In blind deference to the alarm excited at home by temporary financial difficulties, in conformity to the parliamentary phraseology of self-denial, and in improvident impatience for a return to a state of selfish but insecure tranquillity, the Government of India descended from the high station it had so long occupied; resigned all the advantages to which it was both in justice and policy entitled by the

It remains, that the financial results of the operations of government from the close of the first admi- BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

blood and treasure it had been forced to expend; forfeited its character for the honourable discharge of its engagements; made, in the words of the Jypore vakeel "its faith subservient to its convenience," and inspired a general distrust of its principles, and doubt of its strength. Its feeble and ungenerous policy allowed the whole of Hindustan, beyond its own boundaries, to become a scene of fearful strife, lawless plunder, and frightful desolation, for many succeeding years, until the same horrors invaded its own sacred precincts, and involved it in an expensive and perilous warfare, the result of which was its being obliged to assume what it had so long mischievously declined, the avowed supremacy over all the states and princes of Hindustan. What was done in 1817 might have been accomplished, with quite as much reason, with more ease, and still less cost, in 1805. Sindia's power was then completely broken; Holkar was a fugitive; neither deserved any forbearance; both merited signal chastisement; the one for his unwarrantable acts of predatory aggression, the other for his long course of insolence and treachery. Our author, himself, could scarcely have condemned such a consummation, as it would have substituted for that disguised system of control to which, with some reason, he objects, the more honest principle of conquest, which he advocates. Instead of rewarding the perfidy of Sindia with accessions of territory to which he had no claim, it would have been but a just retribution to have diminished that which he retained. Holkar had no territory, he had no legitimate claim to that of which his ancestors had possessed themselves by fraud or force; and the gratuitous restitution to him of the whole of it, was to reward fraud and to invite future insult and spoliation. These were measures of suicidal folly, but it was both treacherous and cruel to abandon the Rajput princes to Mahratta vengeance and rapacity, especially with a full anticipation of what would be the consequences of withdrawing from them the British protection, as they were pointed out with prophetic anticipation by Lord Lake, in his reply to the orders of Lord Cornwallis. That Cornwallis would have modified his purposes upon the receipt of Lord Lake's representations is not very likely, as he was evidently entirely influenced by the impressions he had brought with him from England, but it may be doubted if even he would have enforced the execution of his orders with the precipitancy and inflexibility of Sir G. Barlow, qualities the less to have been expected, as that officer had been one of Lord Wellesley's council; had concurred with him in all his public measures, and in anticipation of his own succession to power during Lord Cornwallis's fatal illness, had written to Lord Wellesley to express "his confident hope that an accommodation would be effected with Sindia and with Holkar, on terms not differing essentially from those to which he was aware that Lord Wellesley was prepared to accede." Cer-

BOOK VI. CHAP. 13.

1805.

nistration of the Marquis Cornwallis, till the present remarkable era, should now be adduced. As regards the British nation, it is in these results that the good or evil of its operations in India is wholly to be found. If India affords a surplus revenue which can be sent to England, thus far is India beneficial to England. If the revenue of India is not equal to the expense of governing India, then is India a burden and a drain to England. This is only an application of the principle, according to which the advantage or disadvantage of new territory, in general, is to be estimated. If the new territory increases the revenue more than the charges, it is advantageous; if it increases the charges in proportion to the revenue, it is hurtful. It is also to be observed, that the interest and redemption of the money expended in making the acquisition must be taken into the account. If it has been made by a war, for example; the whole expense of the war must be taken into the account. And the

tainly Lord Wellesley was not prepared to sacrifice the allies and dependants of the British Government, the Rajas of Boondi and Jypur, to the tender mercies of such invetcrate enemies to the British power and to social order as Ameer Khan and Jeswunt Rao Holkar. It was evident that Sir G. Barlow's measures were regulated by only one principle, obedience to the wishes of the Court of Directors, which he enforced without regard to circumstances or seasons. Lord Lake, not without reason, indignant at the total disregard of his representations, and disdaining to be made the instrument of measures which he condemned, resigned his political and diplomatic powers on the 17th of January, 1806, announcing as the object of the rest of his service in Hindustan, placing the army in cantonments, completing the reduction of the irregular corps, and settling, agreeably to the instructions of the Government, the claims of the native chiefs. These duties occupied him through the remainder of the year, and the following year, in February, 1807, his Lordship embarked at Calcutta for England, leaving a name that retains a distinguished station in the military annals of Bengal, and is affectionately preserved in the traditions of the native army.—W.

new territory must increase the revenue beyond the charges in a degree adequate to the interest and redemption of the whole sum expended in the war, otherwise the acquisition is a positive loss. If the surplus of the revenue were the same after the acquisition as before, the whole expense of the war would be lost; the nation would not be the richer for the acquisition, but the poorer; it would have been its wisdom to have abstained from the war, and to rest contented with the territory which it possessed. If the revenue, after the acquisition, is lessened in proportion to the charge; if the surplus of the revenue is diminished, or the deficit enlarged; in that case, the loss is not confined to that of the whole expense of the war; it is all that, and more; it is the expense of the war, added to the sum by which the balance of the annual receipt and expenditure is deteriorated.[1]

[1] It is singular that a writer of in general such liberal sentiments should have taken so narrow a view of the advantages derived to England from her Indian possessions. India, he argues, is beneficial to England only as it affords a surplus revenue which can be sent to England, that is, in proportion to the direct tribute which it can pay. Now this is to affirm that during the greater number of the years in which we have been in possession of India it has been of no benefit at all. Who will venture to maintain a proposition so contrary to the fact? Regarding our connexion with India even only in the paltry consideration of how much money we have made by it, the assertion that we have profited solely by its surplus revenue, that is, that in five years out of six we have realized no profit at all, is palpably false. In every year of our intercourse with India, even in those in which the public revenue has fallen far short of the expenditure, there has been a large accession to English capital brought home from India. What are the profits of the Indian trade, what is the maintenance of thirty thousand Englishmen, military included; what is the amount of money anually remitted to England for the support of relations, the education of children, the pensions of officers; and finally what can we call the fortunes accumulated by individuals in trade or in the service of the Company, which they survive to spend in England, or bequeath to their descendants? What is all this but additional capital, remitted from India to England; additional, largely additional, means of recompensing

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

With this principle in view, the following statements will require but little explanation.

In the year 1793-4, the revenues in India amounted

British Industry. It is idle, then, to talk of a surplus revenue being the sole source of the benefits derivable from India. On the contrary, it is, and it ought to be, the least even of our pecuniary advantages, for its transfer to England is an abstraction of Indian capital, for which no equivalent is given; it is an exhausting drain upon the resources of the country, the issue of which is replaced by no reflux; it is an extraction of the life-blood from the veins of national industry, which no subsequent introduction of nourishment is furnished to restore. Whatever profit to England, then, the payment to it of a surplus revenue raised in India might afford, the injury done to India would be so disproportionate, that it is to be hoped the legislators of either country will never seriously propose so objectionable a mode of enriching the parent state. In fact, it would do no such thing; the impoverishment of the new territory would very soon disappoint all prospect of gain in the old, and the coffers of England would not long be filled by the surplus revenues of India. Surplus revenue is in fact an absurdity. Properly speaking, there can be no surplus revenue whilst there is a debt to be discharged. If the current charges fall below the current receipts, and the balance is not required for the liquidation of public debt, the receipts will be reduced, and the burdens of the people be relieved. "If what the public contribute in revenue should unexpectedly become more productive, it would be the duty of the government to repeal or to reduce objectionable taxes, to increase the judicial and other establishments, so as to render justice more accessible to the great body of the people, to endow public institutions, for providing better means of education, or hospitals for the care of the sick and destitute, to construct roads and bridges, reservoirs and water-courses, to support caravanserais for the accommodation of the traveller, and otherwise to promote those objects which may conduce to the comfort, convenience, and well-being of our native subjects."—Tucker, Financial Situation of the East India Company. The nature of our connexion with India, unfortunately to such an extent for the latter, does impose an annual tribute, but "considerations of policy, of justice, and humanity, all alike concur to condemn unmeasured exaction." The notion of extorting a large tribute, or any tribute from India, except by indirect means, is calculated to do infinite mischief, and to annihilate in the end the numerous and great benefits which both England and India reap from their mutual intercourse. This is with reference to the connexion, even in its most unworthy aspect. The gain of a higher character, the moral and political power derived from India by England, is a much more real, and important, and honourable benefit, than all the pounds, shillings, and pence that have ever been, or ever will be 'conveyed' from the pockets of the people of India to those of the people of Great Britain.—W.

to 8,276,770*l.*; the whole of the charges, including supplies to the outlying settlements, and the interest of debts, amounted to 6,633,951*l.* There was consequently a surplus of revenue to the amount of 1,642,819*l.*

But this favourable appearance was the result of merely temporary causes; for in the course of four years, though years of peace, and with an economical ruler, it gradually vanished; and in the year 1797-8, when the administration of Marquis Wellesley commenced, there was a deficit of revenue, or a surplus of charge. The revenues amounted to 8,059,880*l.*; the charges and interest to 8,178,626*l.*; surpassing the revenues by 118,746*l.*

The evil was prodigiously increased by the administration of Marquis Wellesley; after all the subsidies which he obtained, and all the territory which he added to the British dominions. In the year 1805-6, in which he closed his administration, the revenues amounted to 15,403,409*l.*; charges and interest to 17,672,017*l.*; leaving a surplus of charge equal to 2,268,608*l.*[1]

Such, at the three different periods under comparison, was the state of the government of India, in respect to income and expenditure. Let us consider

[1] The following is a table of the particulars:—

	Revenues.	Charges.	Net Revenue.
1793-4	£8,276,770	£7,066,924	£2,209,846
1797-8	8,059,880	7,411,401	648,479
1805-6	15,403,409	15,561,328	157,319 net charge.

	Supplies to Out Settlements.	Interest on Debts.	Surplus Revenue.	Surplus Charge.
1793-4	£40,822	£526,205	£1,642,819	£ —
1797-8	163,299	603,926		118,746
1805-6	250,599	1,860,090		2,268,608

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

what was the condition of the Company at the same three periods in respect to debts both at home and in India. In 1793, the debts, both at interest and floating, as they appear upon the face of the Company's accounts, were, in England, 7,991,078*l.*;[1] in India, 7,971,665*l.*; total, 15,962,743*l.* In 1797, the debts in England were, 7,916,459*l.*; in India, 9,142,733*l.*; total, 17,059,192*l.* In 1805, they were, 6,012,196*l.* in England, and 25,626,631*l.* in India; in all, 31,638,827*l.*

In estimating the financial condition of a great government, the annual receipt, as compared with the annual expenditure, and the debt, where debt is incurred, are the only circumstances, usually, which are taken into reckoning, and make up the account. The goods and effects in hand, which are necessary for the immediate movements of the machine, and in the course of immediate consumption, justly go for nothing; since if any part of them is taken away it must be immediately replaced, and cannot form a part of a fund available to any other purpose, without diminishing some other fund to an equal degree.

Departing from this appropriate rule, the East India Company has availed itself of its mercantile capacity, to bring forward regularly a statement of assets, as a compensation for its debts. This, however, is objectionable, on a second account; because, according to the mode in which this statement is framed, it may exhibit at pleasure, either a great or a small amount. Some of the principal articles have hardly any marketable value; could produce

[1] 2,992,440*l.* being deducted, viz. the East India Annuities transferred to the Bank. Fourth Report, 1810, p. 450.

1805.

little, if the Company were left to dispose of them to the best advantage; yet the rulers of the Company assign to them any value which seems best calculated to answer their designs. Houses, for example, warehouses, forts, and other buildings, with their furniture, constitute a large article; set down at several times the value, probably, at which they would sell. Debts due to the Company, and arrears of tribute, form another material ingredient; of which a great proportion is past recovery. A specimen of the mode, in which the account of assets is made up, may be seen in the following fact: that 1,733,328*l.*, as due by the public for the expedition to Egypt, was continued in the Bengal accounts as an asset, after the expense had been liquidated in England; and upwards of 2,000,000*l.* due to the Company by the Nabob of Arcot, and Raja of Tanjore, is continued in the Madras accounts as an asset, though virtually remitted and extinguished upon assuming the territory of the Carnatic.[1]

The account of assets, therefore, exhibited by the East India Company, deserves very little regard, in forming an estimate of the financial situation of the government of India. Being, however, uniformly adduced, as an article of importance in the Company's accounts, its presence is thus rendered necessary here. As the Committee of the House of Commons, formed in 1810, instituted a comparison between the account of assets and debts, for the period of 1793, and the latest period to which their inquiries could extend, there will be an advantage in taking the

[1] See the Third Report of the Committee, 1810, p. 368, and Appendix, No. 2.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

same periods for the subject of that view of the assets which is here required. That Committee entered into a slight examination of the statement exhibited by the East India Company of assets in India, and by making certain large, though far from sufficient deductions, reduced the amount of it nearly one half. Unhappily they did not carry even the same degree of scrutiny into the statement of assets at home, and took it pretty nearly as made up by the Company. According to their adjustments the balance is exhibited thus;

Debts, 1792-3		Assets, 1792-3.	
Home....	£7,991,078[1]	Home	£9,740,832
India	7,992,548	India	3,800,838
Total debts	15,983,626	Total assets	13,541,670
	13,541,670		

£2,441,956, the amount by which, at the first period, the debts exceeded the supposed assets.

Debts, 1809-10.		Assets, 1809-10.	
Home	10,357,088	Home....	14,504,944
India	28,897,742	India	12,222,010
	39,254,830		26,726,954

[1] The difference between this and the debt for that year, as stated in the accounts, arises from the sum of 2,992,440*l.* East India Annuities transferred to the Bank, excluded by the Committee from the Company's accounts.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 13.
1805.

Debts, 1809-10.	Assets, 1809-10.
39,254,830	26,726,954
30,660,119	Add sundries as per note[1] 3,933,165
£8,594,711	£30,660,119

the amount by which, at the second period, the debts exceeded the supposed assets.[2]

To this sum is to be added 2,027,295*l.*, not derived from any intrinsic source either at home or abroad, but subscribed in England in 1793, and 1794, for the addition of one million which the Company was empowered to make to its capital by the new charter of 1793.

The whole of the moneys which have passed into the Company's treasury for capital stock, amounts to the sum of 7,780,000*l.* This remains to be added to the debtor side of its account. The total, then, of the sums on the debtor side of the account at the period in question, viz. the year 1809-10, was 47,034,830*l.*, surpassing the whole of its assets by the sum of 16,374,711*l.*

[1]

Goods and Stores in India in 1810, bought in England, not included in the account of assets	£2,249,060
Balance in favour of the Company at China, in 1810	1,306,606
Ditto at St. Helena	147,628
Ditto Prince of Wales Island	215,786
Ditto Cape of Good Hope	14,085
To be added to amount of assets	£3,933,165

[2] For the above statements, see Third Report, ut supra, p. 368; Fourth Report, ut supra, p. 450.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

Upon the statements by which was exhibited the financial condition of the Company at the close of the administration of Marquis Wellesley, it may be justly remarked, that the expenditure at that time was an expenditure of war, and that the ratio between the ordinary revenues, and a war expenditure, affords not a just view of the financial effects which his administration produced.

Let us take the statements for 1808-9, the last of the years for which we have the aid of the Committee of 1810, in unravelling the confusion, and removing the obscurity of the Company's accounts. The government of India had at this time enjoyed three years of uninterrupted peace; when the financial effects of the administration which closed in 1805 may be supposed to be sufficiently ascertained. In that year the revenues amounted to 15,525,055*l.*; the charges, including supplies to out-lying settlements, and the interest of debts, amounted to 15,551,097*l.*; constituting a surplus of charge to the amount of 26,042*l.* This was a great reduction from 2,268,608*l.*, the excess of charge in 1805; it was even somewhat less than 118,746*l.*, the excess of charge in 1798; but far was this from being a state of receipt adequate to pay the interest and redeem the capital of that enormous sum expended by the wars to which the administration of Marquis Wellesley had given birth. The debts, as they appear upon the face of the accounts were, in England 10,357,088*l.* in 1810; in India 30,876,788*l.* in 1809, which was the last year of which the Committee had received the accounts. The sum of debts was therefore 41,233,876*l.*;

being an addition to the sum of the debts existing in 1805, of little less than 10,000,000*l.*[1] BOOK VI CHAP. 13. 1805.

Among the accounts from the East India Company which are annually presented to Parliament, is an account entitled stock by computation. This consists of the debts of the Company, including every acknowledged claim, on the one side; of the whole of their disposable effects, on the other. On the credit side of this account is placed all the property which has been already spoken of under the name of assets, excepting the greater part of what stands under the name of dead stock, and has little *real*, though set down by the Company at a great *imaginary* value, fixed at the pleasure of those who determine the shape of the accounts. The Committee of 1810 have given the results which this document presents.

On the 1st of March, 1793, the debts were less than the effects; in other words, there was a balance in favour of the concern, to the amount of 1,956,866*l.* On the 1st of March, 1810, the debts were greater than the effects; in other words, there was a balance against the concern, to the amount of 6,025,505*l.* This constitutes a deterioration during the intermediate period, amounting to 7,982,371*l.* To this the same Committee of 1810 add the money raised for capital stock in 1793 and 1794; and after some other adjustments exhibit the deterioration in those seventeen years at 11,062,291*l.*[2]

To the balance of 6,025,505*l.* against the Company in 1810 are to be added the sums received for capital stock, amounting as above to 7,780,000*l.*;

[1] See the Second and Fourth Reports of the Committee of 1810.

[2] Fourth Report, ut supra, p. 451.

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

exhibiting on the debit side of the Company's account, a balance of 13,805,505*l.*; in other words, an amount to that extent, of legitimate claims, which there is nothing whatsoever in the shape of property to meet.

As the operations of the Company are twofold, those of government and those of commerce, it is a question whether the unfavourable result which appears on the comparison of the accounts of stock in the year 1793, and 1810, was produced by the government, or the commerce. This question the Committee in 1810 make an attempt to answer. Beside the charges which clearly belong to the government, and those which clearly belong to the commerce, there are some, of which it is doubtful whether they belong to the government or the commerce. The charges which the Committee represent as clearly belonging to the government exceed the receipts by 6,364,931*l.* Besides this amount there is a sum of 6,875,350*l.*, which they represent as doubtful, whether it belongs to the government or the commerce. This constitutes an unfavourable balance, to the amount of 13,240,281*l.* Exclusive of these doubtful charges, there is a profit upon the goods purchased and sold, or, the commercial transactions of the period, to the amount of 14,676,817*l.* Out of this was paid the dividends upon stock, and the interest upon Debt in England, amounting to 12,515,284*l.*; after which remained a surplus, in aid of government, to the amount of 2,164,533*l.*; reducing the unfavourable balance of 13,240,281*l.* as above, to 110,758, the net deterioration of the period.[1]

[1] Fourth Report, ut supra, p. 262. App. No. 51.

BOOK VI
CHAP. 13.

1805

The Committee exhibited an account which was intended to show how much England gained or lost by India (not including China), during the period of seventeen years from 1793 to 1810. During that period the value of property sent by England to India is stated at 43,808,341*l.*; the value received by England from India is stated at 42,178,640*l.* England therefore lost 1,629,701*l.*[1]

We have a statement by the Court of Directors, which supplies the omission of China. In the year 1808, the financial distresses of the Company compelled the Directors to apply to parliament for relief. To lay a ground for the application, they submitted an exposition of the state of the Company's finances at home and abroad. In this exposition is contained a statement of the sums disbursed in England on account of India and China, and of all the property received from them in return, beginning with the year 1797-8, and ending with the year 1806-7. During that interval England sent to India and China, value more than it received from them, to the amount of 5,691,619*l.*[2]

[1] Third Report, ut supra, p. 373.

[2] The passage in the exposition itself, p. 7, requires to be seen. "The Company have long been in the habit of paying in England political charges strictly appertaining to the territory. For these charges the Company never have credit in the Indian accounts. The large supplies of stores, and part even of the goods, sent out annually by the Company to India, are intended for political purposes, and the whole amount of them should be brought in India to the credit of the Home concern from the time they are shipped; but the practice has been to credit the Company for them only as they were taken out from the Indian warehouses for use, and no losses of such articles in the way outwards or in India, have ever been brought to the credit of London at all. Moreover, it is evident from what has been already stated in this exposition, that the supplies of goods and bullion from England have at times at least exceeded the returns in

BOOK VI CHAP. 13.

1805.

The peace which terminated the war with the Mahrattas, a few months after the period of Lord Wellesley's administration, is the last great epoch, in

the same period. The only way therefore to come to an accurate conclusion, is to state all that England has received from India and China; and sent to or paid for India and China in any given period, and thence to strike the balance. Such a statement is exhibited in the accompanying paper, No. 5, which begins with the year 1797-8, and ends with the year 1806-7. On the one side this statement shows all that has been sent to India and China in goods, stores, and bullion, and all that has been paid for bills drawn from thence, or for political charges attaching to the Indian territory; and on the other side, the statement shows all that has been sent from India and China in goods and bills, and all payments received here from government, or payments made in India for commercial charges, and also for any loss that has occurred in English exports sold there. India and China are not debited for goods lost in the way thither, and they are credited for goods sent thence which have been captured or lost on the passage home. After all these allowances and adjustments, which, according to the best knowledge of the Court, comprehend every thing the account ought to contain, the balance is in favour of England, or of the Company at home 5,691,689*l*. If it be asked from what funds at home the Company have been able to bring India so largely indebted? the answer is obvious; from the increase of their capital stock and bonded debt, and from the considerable temporary credits they always have for investments outward. From this account it is clear, that of the sum of nineteen millions of debt contracted in India since the year 1798-9 down to the year 1807-8, England, or the Company in its commercial capacity, is justly chargeable with no part, and that, on the contrary, India has in that period become largely indebted to England."—M.

This result, it is to be recollected, is not between England, and India, and China, but between the East India Company, and India, and China. Remittances on account of individuals are not comprised in it, and during the whole of this time the value of the goods sent from India in private tonnage was quite considerable enough to turn the balance largely in favour of India. Even, however, as concerns the Company, the account is so constructed as to mislead; without an examination of the details on which it is founded, it is impossible to detect where the fallacy lies, but one source is no doubt in the over-valuation of the exports, and the under-valuation of the imports, the former being invoiced with the addition of an estimate profit, the latter being charged at the cost instead of the selling price. A merchant who should invest ten thousand pounds in the purchase of goods, sell them in India for twelve thousand, convert that twelve thousand pounds into Indian goods, which he would sell in England for twenty thousand, would scarcely consider himself a loser by the transaction.

the series of British transactions in India. With regard to subsequent events, the official papers, and other sources of information, are not sufficiently at command. Here, therefore, it is necessary that, for the present, this History should close.

It was not only from their capital or their credits that the Company defrayed political charges of two millions sterling in the time specified, the profits of their trade contributed. As far, therefore, as this account professes to show the state of the Company's dealings with India and China, it is erroneous, and for a general view of the interchange of capital between India and England, it is worthless.—W.

END OF VOL. VI.

E. Varty, Printer, 27, Camomile Street, Bishopsgate.